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Yours Sincerely
W. D. Ross

Engraved by Allan & Ferguson, 126 Renfield St. Glasgow.

WAIFS:

A HANDFUL OF ESSAYS AND SKETCHES.

BY

WILLIAM TAIT ROSS,

AUTHOR OF "POEMS" (HERBERT MARTYNE).

GLASGOW:

JAMES MACLEHOSE, ST. VINCENT STREET,

Publisher to the University.

1881.

To

The Right Honourable

The Earl of Rosebery,

In Admiration of His Past,

And with High Hopes and Best Wishes for

His Future, Career.

I am not vain enough to think that these humble Essays of mine will make a noise. But as I know that, already, in fragmentary periodicals and newspapers they have given pleasure to not a few sensible and honest folk, I have here gathered them together, in the hope that other kindly readers may find in my unpretending volume something wherewith to beguile a leisure hour, not quite unprofitably, and to whom it may occasionally make "a little sunshine in a shady place."

W. T. R.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PLAGIARISM,	1
OVER THE HILLS,	15
"ESTABLISHMENTS,"	25
OFFENCE TAKING,	37
A RAINY DAY AT ABERFOYLE,	47
A SEANCE WITH A SEQUEL,	63
THE PENNY DAILIES,	76
THE VILLAGE FLOWER SHOW,	87
MOST IMPORTANT NEW PROJECTS,	105
THE PHILOSOPHY OF JOKING,	113
ON THE ADVANTAGES OF NOT KNOWING ANYTHING OF WHAT YOU ARE SPEAKING OR WRITING ABOUT,	121
HOOD'S POEMS,	134
THE TESTIMONIAL,	149
A LAY LECTURE ON REVIVALISM,	153
NOEL PATON'S "ILLUSTRATIONS OF SLAVERY,"	162

PAGE

HENRY GLASSFORD BELL'S "MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS," 171

MEDICINE AND MERCHANDISE, ... 178

GULLIBILITY—WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, ... 183

VOLTAIRE, ... 195

"FROM GRAVE TO GAY,
FROM LIVELY TO SEVERE."

WAIFS.

PLAGIARISM.

THIEVING, although an art of very ancient date and universal prevalence, has never been accounted a very respectable pursuit. There are some things which antiquity helps to make respectable, but this is hardly one of them. On the contrary, that ingenious portion of mankind who possess but very misty perceptions of the great and essential distinction between *meum* and *tuum*, and who devote their time and talents to the cultivation of the art of thieving, are rather shunned than otherwise, by people who attach some importance to that distinction. Insomuch that, as matter of fact, let any member of this extensive brotherhood attain

to what eminence he may in his peculiar and oftentimes arduous vocation, society does not, on that account, court his company; you don't invite him to tea, nor get up a soiree, nor give a dinner in his honour, nor present him with a testimonial, nor build a monument to him when he rests from his labours, as is usual in the case of other great men. Of course I am here talking only of those artists whose operations are confined to the commoner walks of life. If we ascend to the "great masters" who have the will and the power to steal a province or an island, and do it, then the case is very different. *There* the magnitude of the operation completely changes the character of the act; "success is virtue, and misfortune crime"; we live with him on the most friendly terms, entertain for him the highest respect; we visit at his house, partake of his hospitality, and, peradventure, give him our daughter in marriage. His work was accomplished amid the blare of trumpets, the roar of artillery, the shrieks of slaughtered men, and the flames of burning towns and villages; and all that makes such a difference! The poor soul who, in a moment of abstraction, dips his hand into your pocket, and removes your dirty handkerchief; or into your till, and makes away with the few coppers he may chance to find there, is ignominiously lugged into the presence of the "presiding

magistrate" by a common policeman and consigned to *quod.* And all that makes such a difference! Ah, well there is a great deal of dust blowing about this rickety old world of ours, and we won't see things clearly until that dust is pretty well laid.

I am aware that with the Spartans, a most renowned nation of antiquity, stealing was considered a virtue; and that among them the art was carried to very high perfection. I wish, indeed, that we moderns could excel in some of the better virtues we talk about, in anything like the same degree. Also, I am aware that in another great nation of our own times, whose doings not long ago filled the world with a great noise, to be able to do a "smart thing," that is, a dishonest thing in the way of trade, whereby you walk round a customer with his eyes open all the while, is accounted a creditable effort of legitimate ingenuity, and by no means disqualifies the performer for church membership. Nay, indeed, I am not sure but that among ourselves, in our eager bargain-making and buying and selling, and everything that concerns our unappeasable hunger for money, the thin line that separates honesty from its opposite is not often crossed, and that we chuckle, too, over our success. But then it is in the very highest degree creditable to us that we are ashamed of our roguery—*if it is found out.* Nor do

I forget that in our own country, in times not very remote, bold reivers and moss-troopers flourished among our mountains and fortresses, sweeping down from time to time, like an avalanche, and *lifting* the rich plains and valleys, much to the astonishment and grief of the peaceful dwellers there; and that around their exploits genius has thrown a halo of romance in many an immortal song and story, which make the deeds and the men look very fine as seen through the mist of years, *in print;* although, I warrant you, they presented an exceedingly prosaic appearance to the poor victims. Many of these men, it is true, were no vulgar robbers, who took to thieving for its own sake, and the petty and perilous advantages thence accruing, but men, some of whom, like our own Rob Roy, were animated by a wild sense of justice, and a devout belief that they were born to set matters right between the oppressed and the oppressors :—

"Said generous Rob—What need of books?
  Burn all the statutes and their shelves;
They stir us up against our kind,
  And worse, against ourselves.

We have a passion, make a law
  Too false to guide us or control,
And for this law itself we fight
  In bitterness of soul.

And puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
  Distinctions that are plain and few;
These find I graven on my heart
  That tells me what to do.

For why? Because the good old rule
  Sufficeth them, the simple plan—
That they should take who have the power,
  And they should keep who can."

Peace to the ashes of the brave and generous outlaw, who, if he lived in these more humdrum days, might find the simple plan more difficult of accomplishment than it was in his own; and who, under happier auspices, and as General Roy Macgregor, might have led a brigade of his gallant countrymen up the heights of Alma; been thanked by Parliament for his skill, valour, and success; been voted a pension and estate whereon to spend the residue of his honoured life; died, followed to his grave by a nation's tears; and, finally, have slept in solemn peace in the national Valhalla, side by side with the great ones whose silent tombs make the name of England glorious throughout every land. *Tempora mutantur et mutamur in illis;* and who can tell how many great men are lost to the world for want of opportunity—just because they were born at the wrong time.

I know too, that the brigand of modern times—a fellow with a huge sugar-loaf hat, immense beard, and

eyes glittering like the dagger which he will thrust into your doublet with small scruple if you decline to "fork out"—looks very picturesque in a painting with a nicely gilt frame, and that his exploits, particularly in novels, fill the hearts of young ladies with a romantic agitation. And yet brigand is just the sonorous synonym for thief; and a thief of the very vulgarest kind. But thief is a sneaking hangdog word, not at all romantic; and the rose under this name does not smell so sweet. It may be said that all these instances form an abatement from, or modification of, my initiatory proposition; but, in truth, it will be seen on reflection that they are only seemingly contradictory, and confirm the rule. I am therefore disposed to abide by my original axiom, "That thieving, although an art of very ancient date and universal prevalence, has never been accounted a very respectable pursuit."

The foregoing remarks apply, of course, only to material thefts, or annexations, or appropriations, or by whatever other euphemism you may choose to call them; and from these we shall pass by an easy transition, I hope, to another kind of theft which, although immaterial, is yet very important, seeing that it wilfully and feloniously seizes and runs away with your thoughts, and the very dress in which they are clothed—the perpetrator all the while leading innocent people to

believe that they were his own personal property, whereby he creates a favourable sensation for a time, until, like the ass in the lion's skin, he begins to speak his own language and show his ears, and then of course it is "all up," as the vulgar saying is, which, however, I apologise for quoting. This is the kind of theft known by the name of plagiarism, or literary stealing; and it is alarming to think of the number of criminals of this kind who are at large in these times. And what makes matters worse, no policeman can apprehend them, no magistrate can award them a month with hard labour, and penal servitude is out of the question. Of course, I don't mean by plagiarism that adoption or appropriation by a really gifted mind of the dead lumber and rubbish of thought, stowed away in dusty and forgotten corners, till it is shone upon by the light of genius, which, by a kind of divine alchemy, transmutes the base into the precious, and makes the world all the richer and wiser for the theft. A gem is a gem, it is true, whether it flashes upon the brow of beauty, or lies embedded in its native dirt; but the true artist and benefactor is he who, finding it in the latter low estate, cunningly fashions it with many facets, and gives it a worthy setting; so that, if the gem is a thought, he forms it into one of those "jewels five words long, that on the stretched forefinger of all Time sparkles

for ever." Shakespeare found the bones of some of his noblest dramas floating about in traditionary story and misty legend, and, waving the wand of Prospero, endowed them with life, thought, feeling, and gave "to airy nothing a local habitation and a name." Milton found Adam and the angels buried in the obscure work of an obscure Italian poet—bade them come forth, clothed them with the majesty of his mighty genius, and made them familiar guests in the dwellings of men, till these heavens and this earth shall pass away. Burns, too, found many of the rude ditties of his native land wandering about like ghosts among her hills and dales, her woods and streams and valleys, becoming every year more unsubstantial, and clothed them in words, now strong as an Alpine cataract, and now soft and low as—

> "The noise of a hidden brook,
> In the leafy month of June,
> That to the sleeping woods all night
> Singeth a quiet tune,"

so that they have become "music married to immortal verse," and part of the nation's heart for ever. To cry "plagiarism" here would be about as appropriate as to apply it to the plant that strikes its roots into the soil, and from the common elements of earth, air, and light, ere long raises aloft a colossal trunk, with a mighty

circumference of spreading branches, covered with a glorious garniture of green leaves, and bending beneath huge clusters of golden fruitage. Neither do I care much for those hypercritics, or value their labours highly, who are continually sniffing a plagiarism in every accidental resemblance they meet with, and who are the terror of young authors who have not yet learned to despise them. It does not seem at all strange that in the boundlessness of thought and the limitation of language, different minds, excogitating the same subject, should sometimes hit upon the same idea, sentiment, or image, and clothe it in words almost the same. And sometimes, too, as every writer must have felt, the plagiarism is quite innocent and unconscious. Some thoughts, a verse or line we have heard or read long years ago, and forgotten in the concrete, may have left a distant echo floating in the soul, we can't tell how produced; and writing or speaking on any cognate subject that calls it up, we may, without the slighest hint of wrong-doing, but, on the contrary, with a thrill of creative pleasure, weave it into the texture of our own thoughts and fancies, as our own proper imagination. The plagiarist I have in my eye writes his lucubrations with a pair of scissors and a paste pot, which marvellously assist rapidity of composition, and effect a considerable saving in the mid-

night oil. It is not likely that his countenance is "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." Others labour, and he enters into their labour—pleasantly reaping where he has not sowed. He can purchase the materials, the same as you purchase the materials for the erection of a house, and build a book; and, although the humblest of literary hodmen, he walks abroad with the like feeling of conscious superiority as if he were the original architect or author. His counterfeit coin of course is not likely to impose on the knowing class, who are accustomed to the handling of genuine gold and silver, and whose ear can at once detect the true ring of the same. But then how many thousands of men and women are there who, in a literary sense, resemble children, and prefer a new penny to a golden guinea, because it is bigger and shines quite as much, or perhaps more; and so long as they cannot distinguish the difference between his own proper coppers and the more precious *foreign* coin wherewith they are mingled, so long will he continue to enjoy a reputation among them, if not enviable at least considerable. It needs a man of taste and judgment to steal another's thoughts judiciously. The most only weaken and spoil what they appropriate, for instead of passing through the alembic of their own minds, becoming fused unto their mental structure,

and coming forth in other and perhaps better forms; their operations may be compared to those of one who industriously mends and repairs the rents and holes in his coarse woollen habiliments with pieces of rich silk tapestry, and is cheerfully unconscious all the time that he cuts a ridiculous figure.

Much has been said and written about the plagiarism of the clergy, although I do not suppose our ministers have yet got the length of their "brethren" south of the Tweed, who are supplied from the manufactory in London with lithographed sermons, in all styles of eloquence, from the lowest to the highest, and at prices ranging from eighteenpence to a crown. I should like to know what kind of conscience the parson has who stoops to preach this purchased piety, and deals out to his "dear hearers" from Sabbath to Sabbath the cheap and musty theology of some poor penny-a-liner, whose "powerful eloquence" has been penned up some dirty alley perhaps, amid the fumes of tobacco, and stimulated by copious libations of gin and water. No. I don't believe that any of our clergy have come so far down as that yet. I believe that most of them conscientiously try to give us the best of their own, although cases do come to light now and again, where a weak brother, who would do very well as a mere barn-door fowl, arrays himself in the gorgeous plumage

of a bird of Paradise without the slightest acknowledgment. To such an one I would commend these words for his earnest meditation, and as the subject of his next discourse:—"Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hand the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Ephesians iv. 28). At the same time, I think it right to say that I am by no means strait-laced, but quite the reverse in the matter of clerical plagiarism. I have no objections personally to clergymen stealing as much as they please, provided they do it *honestly* and judiciously; and I am satisfied that no compositions are so much benefited by the process as sermons. But let the process be acknowledged or understood, or, at all events, let no mean attempts be made at concealment. We Scotch people in particular have a tremendous appetite for sermons, insomuch that I sometimes think we have too much preaching and too little worship. But so long as we require our minister to come to the pulpit Sabbath after Sabbath with two new discourses in his pocket, each occupying say an hour in the delivery, how can we expect him to be always original and profound? It is simply a mental impossibility, and we are to blame for making such an unreasonable demand on poor clerical human nature, which is only human nature after all. For,

put the case in this way:—Suppose a young man to begin preaching at the age of 25, and to continue preaching till he attains 70, and that he delivers two discourses every Sabbath. At a moderate computation his 104 discourses per annum would fill six goodly octavo volumes, which being multiplied by 45—the term of his preaching life—would give us a net product of 270 volumes. Just think of it! Therefore I am not disposed to join the hue and cry against the preacher who, finding elsewhere materials better than he can supply himself, works them into the web of his own compositions, and so benefits his hearers—only, as I said before, let this be honestly understood on both sides. For here it is *concealment* that constitutes the theft, and no wise man will be the less wise for believing and acting on the belief that men have lived before him somewhat wiser and better than himself—a belief surely that will not seriously shock any intelligent and judicious hearer. I may be thought too liberal when I say that I could hear read from the pulpit the masterpieces of Bourdaloue, Massillon, or Bossuet, or the sermons of Barrow, South, Hooker, Taylor, and the other great English divines, with as much content and profit as I could derive from the spoken discourses of most of our own preachers, provided I were duly apprised of the sources whence

the logic and eloquence were drawn, and not given to understand that they were the preacher's own. But literary theft is a mean vice, and meanest of all in the pulpit; and the systematic perpetrator and concealer thereof will, sooner or later, come to realise Emerson's far-reaching words:—"In labour, as in life, there can be no cheating. The thief steals from himself, the swindler swindles himself. For the real price of labour is knowledge and virtue, whereof wealth and credit are signs. The signs, like paper, may be counterfeited or stolen; but that which they represent, namely knowledge and virtue, cannot be counterfeited or stolen."

OVER THE HILLS.

WAS I ever up the Alps? Did I ever stand "at Venice on the Bridge of Sighs?" Did I ever *do* the Rhine, or take a bird's-eye view of the universe from the summit of Mount Ararat? Perhaps not. I rather think not. But what of that? What I mean to say is this, that one doesn't need to travel a hundred or a thousand miles from home to behold scenes as good as these. Of course, if you are a snob, you will spread yourself abroad over foreign countries, and believe (or say) there is nothing worth seeing in your own; and come back—how much the wiser, think you? Nothing to speak of, seeing that you could not avoid travelling in your own company. Get acquainted with your own lochs and mountains, rivers and valleys, woods and glens, and the manifold scenes of quiet beauty and wild magnificence that make up the features of our own dear land. Then

go abroad; and if you find anything better or grander in foreign countries, you can just remain there. But, notwithstanding, I must be permitted to remain of the opinion that finer scenery than that in which our own noble river (Clyde) is set, is not to be found anywhere—an opinion backed by all impartial travellers and men of gumption. And then the great sea-arms, reaching from the river far among the hills, to which you may be borne in a few hours, and wander in solitudes as complete as Patmos, and see visions, too, which it may do you good amid the turmoil of city life to keep fresh in your memory for ever.

"Over the Hills"—the very words are full of poetry, and even while I write I seem to feel the fresh breezes fanning my cheek, and the big city and its cares seem very unsubstantial and remote. Come then, if you deserve to be in such superior society, and accompany us a day's journey over the mountains from Lochgoilhead to Blairmore. "Circumstances (as a person says when he calls his creditors together) over which we had no control," found half a dozen fellow-travellers obliged to "put up," one night lately, at the comfortable little inn at Lochgoilhead, and the same circumstances rendered it necessary that they should walk the whole distance thence to Blairmore across the hills, which, as anybody may know if he tries, can only

be done on foot. After breakfast, therefore, the following morning, we girt up our loins for the task—that is, my friends the Councillor, Mr. Carver, Mr. Binder, Mr. Shanks, Mr. Wallding, and myself—Mr. Deeds, if you please. Turning to the right, after leaving the inn, we double the head of the loch, whose sullen depths, like the moody face of a misanthrope, are never lighted with a smile. On the one side, the loch is walled in by steep, in many places precipitous rocks, jagged and rugged beyond description; and although the heather, moss, and lichen have kindly tried to hide these huge granite bones of our common mother, their success has been very limited, for the mountains on that side remain in their original nakedness—a chaos of barrenness and desolation. On this side, along which our route lies, the hills are more rounded in their outlines, and covered with a decent quantity of clothing. The road, which winds for some miles along the margin of the loch, is one of the most beautiful that can well be imagined, screwing, as it does, its way through a perfect grove of "siller birks," hazels, larches, and rowan trees, bending beneath their crowns of crimson berries, through which, ever and anon, glimpses are caught of the gloomy loch below, and of the white cottages of the village shining in the sun, while the everlasting hills lie piled above, each, as it were, standing on tiptoe, and trying to look

over its neighbour's shoulder. And thus we trudge on, with joke and laugh and song, till we reach Carrick Castle, a dilapidated fortress of the Bruces, standing on a rocky promontory shooting out into the loch, and from the top of which a splendid view is obtained of the surrounding scenery. Here we rest and refresh, for just beyond this point the hill ascent begins. Not a cloud in the sky; everywhere a solemn stillness, deepened, not broken, by the distant bleating of sheep far up the heights, which show like white dots among the heather —a silence more eloquent than speech, that steals into the soul like a holy atmosphere from this temple not made with hands; for here we feel

> "Each cloud-capped mountain is a holy altar,
> An organ breathes in every grove,
> And the full heart's a psalter,
> Rich in deep hymns of gratitude and love."

Now for the hills in earnest! Gazing up their colossal sides, even the strongest among us see that the task is no joke, and, after half an hour's climbing, are convinced of the fact more than ever. But up, still up, with the pulse quickened into a gallop, and the sweat pouring in small rivers down your face, the Councillor heading the movement, as nimble as a five-year-old, generally far in advance, and often seated in the distance on the most inaccessible peak within sight, watching

with philosophical serenity the panting ascent of his weaker brethren. Road or track there is none, and we have just to trust to our geographical instincts that we will land somewhere on this side of Ardentinny. Hallo! the Powers preserve us; but there is Shanks up to—what shall I call it?—in a bog-hole, making violent but unavailing efforts to get out! On the contrary, he is gradually disappearing, and all hands rush to the rescue. Begging him to be firm—which is somewhat difficult in a bog—we promptly make a rope of our pocket handkerchiefs, throw a lasso over our unfortunate comrade, and, by dexterous manipulation, finally succeed in extracting him from his perilous position, with his nether man encased in an entirely new pair of trousers. Now, this laughable but dangerous *faux pas* all came of taking a "short cut," which, in travelling, as well as in other affairs, it is often better to avoid; for, as a general rule, you will accomplish your journey more speedily and with more ease by just *sticking to* the ordinary route than by taking a deceptive short cut and *sticking in* a bog every now and again. On the same principle I dislike short cuts to wealth, which were never more abundant than in these times, and which very frequently land the ambitious pedestrian in grief, like our friend abovementioned. Short cuts to wisdom never lead you there; and short cuts to health, particularly if they are

paved with pills, are likely to prove equally abortive. Therefore, my respectable brother, treasure up this aphorism within your bosom, and cause your offspring to write it in their copy-books—*Short cuts are dangerous.*

But on, still on, across heather, bog, and boulder; the sun is westering, the air is getting chillier, and a long way "lies between us and our hames"—you know the rest. I, for one, am nearly done, although not more so than some of the others, to judge by the chorus of "pechin'" in the rear. As for the Councillor, it's enough to raise one's dander to a red heat to see him pulling on with such sturdy coolness, and shouting in the distance at us to be quick and reach his coigne of 'vantage to see the splendid view, as if the view would not be there to-morrow, or much longer even, and as if anything more than hills, and more hills, were to be seen wherever you can look. Surely our friend is a near relative of that redoubtable traveller of whom it is said—

"Commodore Rogers was a man exceedingly brave, particular,
He could climb up high rocks, exceedingly high, perpendicular;
And what made this the more inexpressible,
These same rocks were quite inaccessible."

Everybody knows the deception of distance among the mountains—how, after struggling manfully to reach what you think *must* be the highest point *now*, you find

another, and another, and another ugly peak looking remorselessly down upon you, and inviting you to come on, till you begin to inquire within—Oh, why left I my hame, why did I mount the steep? why did I warsle on till my legs can hardly creep? the hills are nae great joke, as far as I can see, and I canna get a blink o' Blairmore quay. But even the everlasting hills must come to an end, and we are on the highest height at last. After stretching away, away to the left, over an undulating expanse of comparatively dry moss, "scrunty heather," and tufts of hungry-looking grass, we begin to descend, gently at first, which is rather pleasant after the toilsome climb we have achieved; but this does not last long, till at length the descent in many places becomes so precipitous, and lies amid such a wilderness of loose boulders, that locomotion is at once disagreeably rapid and dangerous—you are like to be shaken to pieces, and it requires your utmost efforts to keep your feet and hold yourself together. Miss your footing, and you will be bowled to the bottom like a barrel. But take notice of Carver—observe that able pedestrian performing a cautious dodge far below—the hill being at that point nearly as steep as the side of a house: he is sliding down, if not comfortably and gracefully, at least with considerable velocity, *a posteriori*, utterly reckless of his unmentionables, and of the fact that Hyam and Moses

& Son have no outfitting establishments in these quarters. Having decided objections, on every ground, to this style of doing it, the rest of us jolt down as best we can, laterally and literally, walking on the sides of our shoes, to catch a firmer hold of the declivity, zigzaging across here, and up and down there, till our course becomes as tortuous as a law plea, but only much shorter.

Hurrah! yonder at last is the level turnpike meandering like a white thread through the valley, suggesting pleasant visions of home (and of the inn at Ardentinny in the first place), and about as welcome a sight as the stream in the desert to the thirsty traveller. So, through ravine, across gorge, over heather, and at length we reach the road, about two miles on the Whistlefield side of Ardentinny; and there, stretched *ad longum* on the adjoining greensward, lies Mr. Carver, sadly exhausted and dilapidated by his day's exertions. After resting here a space, with the hills and huge rocks glooming down upon us as if in silent amazement at our hardihood, we skirted along the bosky woods and pleasant policies of Glenfinnart, till we reached Ardentinny—that nestling nook of quiet beauty, whose rival we have not met elsewhere. After a jolly tea and a rasher of bacon at the inn (don't ask if we marched into it), we borrowed a needle and thread from the landlady with

which we sewed up our friend Carver in a temporary manner, making him tolerably presentable once more among the genteel society of Strone, which we reached towards ten in the evening, having been on the tramp about eleven hours in all. We had intended to return home the night before, and the womenkind were therefore as much gratified by our appearance as they had been alarmed by our absence; for some of them had been indulging in dark imaginings about our fate, and had seriously discussed the propriety of employing the bellman. However, here we are safe and sound, barring a few aching limbs; and the present writer rather thinks that it will be some time before he repeats the same journey "over the hills." And yet, is there one of us who would willingly forego the memory of his adventures and his toils? No, no. As the mountain scenery and mountain breezes were good for the body, clearing away the dust and cobwebs of our city lives, so is the remembrance of them good for the mind; and so in after years, and in the routine round of our daily work, we may in our own experience realise these lines:—

"Well for the heart that still can keep, amid the town's loud noise,
A sacred nook, for ever fresh to nature's purer joys;
That in the crowded street can see, or in the lonely room,
The glinting streams, the breezy hills, the golden-tasselled broom.

"The echoing laugh, the joyous song of many a bygone year,
Still flush the soul with happiness, and linger on the ear;
Kind memory treasures up the scenes for weary heart and brain,
And thus amid the city's dust we tread the hills again!"

"Bravo!" shouts the Councillor, "that breathes the genuine inspiration of the mountains;" and I am willing to believe the Councillor's a judge.

"ESTABLISHMENTS."

LET no one who notes this title be alarmed. I am not going to launch into a dissertation upon Church and State endowments, Voluntaryism, poor bishops preaching humility on £10,000 per annum, and curates "passing rich on £40 a-year," Maynooth grants, *et hoc genus omne.* I am to expatiate on quite other kinds of establishments. As I was blown along the Great Western road to dinner one windy day lately, I had just time to observe a wooden box, probably six feet square, standing in a line with the footpath. Surveying this erection with as much equanimity as I could command, I perceived a signboard along the top, whereon were inscribed in immense letters, preposterously out of keeping with the size of the institution, the words —"CHIMNEY SWEEPING ESTABLISHMENT." Without being an athlete, I think I could have put the whole "establishment" on a wheelbarrow, and trundled it

along the road with comfort. In point of fact, I wondered how it managed to keep its feet in the windy gusts and swirls that came tearing along, and that seemed momently to threaten to lift it (including the man inside) into the air like a *shaving*, and deposit the whole either in the Botanic Garden or the Kelvin—thus making a clean *sweep* of the entire concern. On the whole, I think it ought to be brought under the cognizance of the Dean of Guild, before any such catastrophe happens—although that ancient and at present vigorous functionary may think that, being a *moveable* and not an heritable subject, it lies beyond his province. As I continued to be blown along the road, I could not help meditating how prone we are in this pushing generation to dignify small things by big names. Here was a thing which was unquestionably a box, but which the enterprising proprietor—by way of finding a *vent* for his genius, and with the imposing and sonorous euphemism which distinguishes so many of our commercial operations in these days—designates an establishment. If the name is found more suitable, and decidedly helps to extend his connection in "lums," and the repair of "auld wives,"[1] I can have no objec-

[1] "Auld wife"—A peculiar form of chimney-can which, at a distance, bears a remarkable resemblance to an old woman, when her head-dress consisted, as it did frequently in our grandfathers' days, of a mutch like a coal-scuttle.

tion of course; although I think his success would be none the less for a more modest title to his place of business.

In many of the small streets of the town, a dapper and industrious class of professors pursue an honest avocation, which at one time (and that not very distant) was conjoined with that of the healing art—I mean barbers. I do not refer to those elegant shaving emporiums in our more fashionable streets, where old men of sixteen may have the dawning down removed from their chin, and their future whiskers brushed and scented in the most elegant and genteel manner for a shilling; and where young men of sixty may have their beard and other hirsute appendages, including their ambrosial locks, polished up in the most fascinating style for the like remuneration. I refer to those "bunkers" one frequently sees jammed in between larger buildings, so as to be almost imperceptible, but for the traditional long pole and brass basin projecting from the top of the door; where journeymen shoemakers, with faces dun like their own leather; strong-limbed navvies, looking as if they had just been dug out of the Old Red Sandstone; and grim mechanics, with whiskers full of iron filings, may procure their weekly stubble removed by the (Saturday) Knight of the Razor, for the "small charge of one penny." Here, the proprietor magni-

ficently apprises the public, by a flaming signboard, that his place of business is—not a bunker, nor even an establishment, but—a "SHAVING SALOON;" although it would puzzle Captain M'Clintock to discover in what part of the premises the saloon is located—the word being generally suggestive of something extensive, lofty, and spacious. Indeed, many of these saloons are so minute in their dimensions, that it is only by long practice the operator manages to accommodate, with entire safety, the rapid movements of his elbow to the chin of the *operatee;* and the customers are literally obliged to "stand" their turn—there being no spare space for chairs or other kinds of seats, a thing not of much consequence, as the frequenters look upon them as mere forms. I wonder he didn't think of calling his place a Shaving Warehouse! Now, if Shaving Saloon were inscribed on the doors of lawyers' offices, one might perceive some harmony in the name, although these artists don't shave at such moderate charges as our friend the barber. However, much as I object, on moral grounds, to the big name he bestows on his bunker, I wish him well. May his razor never grow rusty!—his crops never fail!—and may he be always up to the chin in business!

Everybody knows how Lord Auchinleck disapproved of the connection between his son Bozzy and brave old

Johnson, who, he said, was "only a dominie wha keepit a schule and ca'd it an academy." The academy could not have been extensive, for Lord Macaulay tells us the philosopher had never more than three pupils. It will be observed that in our days there is hardly such a thing as a school. They are all either academies, educational establishments, institutions, seminaries, or some other equally grand affairs, where the young idea is taught to shoot; except our venerable University, where, on suitable occasions, it shoots peas at other young ideas, and at the heads of the learned professors. It is only in rural districts that the original "schule" can now be found, and where may yet be met with a specimen of the genuine dominie, who devoutly believes in the famous (modernized) maxim of the poet:—

> "'Tis education forms the common mind,
> And with a twig we drive it in behind."

the twig in this case being thus literally a "branch" of education. Having myself received many a stinging "palmy," and vigorous whack in other quarters, under the old *régime*, I am free to admit that the modern system is much the more pleasant, as I hope it is also the more efficacious. But I don't know whether the fact of a school being called an academy, establishment, or institution materially promotes the progress of the

pupils; although it may give them higher notions of their educational attainments, and induce them to look down with compassionate superiority upon children who acquire their A B C in places bearing the humbler appellation.

> "All the world's a school,
> And all the men and women in it
> Merely scholars."

With entire appropriateness we call the world a school, which has a considerable staff of the most experienced masters, too, and able assistants; where all of us are continually learning some lessons useful or otherwise; and where the fees charged are often pretty high. But I don't think we can, with any congruity, designate it an academy, establishment, or institution; and I prefer the humbler, more business-like name, by which the most famous school in England is known (Eton) to these high-sounding titles which, like much of what is taught under them, are often empty and make-believe.

Again, what numbers of small huckster shops their proprietors dignify by the name of "Warehouses!" This big assumption for a small thing is not so common in a great commercial city, where the warehouse proper —gigantic in its dimensions, and amazing in its contents —is so conspicuous and well defined, that a petty shop

cannot, with any degree of modesty or vraisemblance, usurp the title; although examples to the contrary are by no means uncommon, where the expansive proprietor, with a soul above a mere shop, baptizes his bunker by the spacious name of warehouse. This particular imitation of greatness is more frequently to be met with in small country towns, where, generally speaking, every shopkeeper is a "merchant," except, perhaps, the baker, the butcher, and the shoemaker. I was particularly struck, on one occasion, with this amusing feature in a well-known coast town within two hours of Glasgow. A friend of mine, Mr. Samuel Gigot, who bears a strong resemblance to Dr. Johnson, and who is touched with much of the humour of the melancholy *Jacques* (was *Jacques* melancholy or merely waggish?), called my attention to the subject, and I remember we had many a hearty guffaw at the ludicrous contrast between the actual small place of merchandise, and the imposing "Warehouse" above the door. For my part, I did not see a single shop in the town. You had the "Grocery Warehouse," where not more than three persons could get to the counter at once; where the stock, which seemed to be chiefly in the window, consisted of a box of red herrings, ditto of raisins, a bottle of pickles, a "wedge" of soap, a sugar loaf, a crystal case full of "rock," ditto half full of sweeties, three pint bottles of

"Bass," a set of shoe brushes, a long broom, and a number of other odds and ends; the *personnel* of the warehouse consisting exclusively of the proprietor, who, with tucked up sleeves, a dirty white apron, and a Kilmarnock nightcap, was trying to persuade himself that he was tremendously busy.

Then you had the "Drapery Warehouse," not much bigger than a mature sentry-box, with a few comprehensive crinolines dangling outside the door, over the heads of the passers-by; while inside, the "stock" was doubled by the help of a mirror at the end of the warehouse, so dexterously placed, that a near-sighted person like myself wondered why the proprietor never took down any of the parcels from the shelves in that quarter. But he may think such reflections out of place *here.* He was a big, broad-shouldered fellow, with immense whiskers and a fierce moustache; and we could see him, through the window, snipping off a yard of blue ribbon for a pink boarding-school miss who had entered the warehouse in quest of that commodity. I thought at the time that the transaction could not have looked much more ridiculous had he been the customer and she the merchant. I count a tailor a man in comparison with these *he*-milliners.

Then you had a fruit warehouse, a cigar warehouse, with lots of other warehouses; and, to crown all, a

potato warehouse. In the same aspiring little town may also be seen I don't know how many "coal depôts," each containing a few hundredweight of coal, with a donkey and cart quite competent, in the event of a sudden "run," to carry off the whole contents of the depôt at one or two lifts.

But why should I enlarge on this humble kind of commercial flunkeyism—the small aping the manners of the great? It is the old story of the frog and the ox, which was true long before the days of Æsop, and which, to all appearance, will be illustrated amongst us for a long while to come yet. To call a penny barber's little shop a "shaving saloon," or a chimney-sweep's box an "establishment," is perhaps an innocent device enough, whereby not many people can be taken in; and if the humble tradesman feels loftier in consequence, in a business point of view, not much harm is done. But as the ludicrous and the grave are never far apart, but are always crossing each other in light and shadow —as

> "Not a string is tuned to mirth
> But has its chord in melancholy"—

so, without assuming a white choker, I may inquire whether it is not from this same flunkey spirit—the wish to appear bigger than we are, the desire to *seem* rather than to *be*—that so much of the sham of modern life

proceeds? And, in particular, methinks it is to this same spirit that we owe so many of the shameless bankruptcies and legal swindlings that have so largely disgraced our commercial annals of late; and the publication of which, with all their unprincipled details, in the omnivorous penny papers, does not, in my humble opinion, contribute to public morality, but the reverse. Well, that's *aside.* What I mean to say is this, that numbers of people appear to be socially big just because they are moral cowards—they have not the courage to seem what they are; they must live in fine houses, indulge expensive tastes, and every kind of immoral extravagance, in foolish and impotent imitation of their wealthy neighbours, until the inevitable hour arrives which remorselessly rubs off the Birmingham lacquer that so dazzled the eyes of humbler folks, and they are seen to have been but the commonest brazen impostors all along. Oh, for the moral courage to live naturally! —how many of us would then live more honestly. I have a sincere respect for "honest poverty," and for the man that "daur be poor for a' that"—nothing but supreme contempt for him whose fine house, extravagant living, expensive dresses, and "imposing" equipage, are the plunder of industrious tradesmen and their families. I honour the poverty which, with quiet pride, makes many a hard struggle to hide its nakedness—with many

a bitter pang of self-denial, but at no man's expense; that dares to come abroad in corduroy when it cannot get broadcloth; that can don a linsey-woolsey gown with as much pride as a silken robe, when that is beyond its reach; that can be contented, happy, independent, in a "but and ben," when it cannot afford a villa, or other more extensive "establishment." And which, after all, my dear Mrs. Grundy, is the more respectable and genteel—he who, though poor, can, like Longfellow's village blacksmith—

> "Look the whole world in the face,
> For he owes not any man;"

or he whose life is a series of subterfuges, lies, evasions, frauds, to hide the hateful poverty of fictitious splendour, that, when the time comes (and it always does come), tumbles to pieces like a house of cards? Then, of course, we have all a kick at the *debris;* and even Mrs. Grundy, who used to have many a good dinner at that sham establishment, exclaims vehemently (and, of course, virtuously) against the collapsed humbug.

There is nothing I value Thackeray's fine story of "Philip" more for than this—the hero is never ashamed of his poverty, but goes shouldering his way through all the prim gentilities and conventionalities that surround him, with a magnificent *nonchalance;* equally at home with his legs under Lord Ringwood's mahogany—in the

little sister's humble lodging—smoking with his brother pressmen; and far happier with only thirty *sous* in his pocket, than when living in the spectral splendour of the Firmin paternal mansion. Beside such a genuine, manly character, we feel instinctively how small the pinchbeck Twysdens and Bickertons are; and if our great novelist had taught no other lesson through this refreshing portrait than that a true man need not be ashamed because he is poor, the world would be his debtor; for the lesson will be as influential, at least, as many sermons. How many are ashamed of meanness of circumstances who never think of blushing for meanness of conduct! And where should the shame lie? A strange query wherewith to close an essay on "Establishments;" but not so impertinent either, if the reader will think of it.

OFFENCE-TAKING.

THERE are some people who seem born to create the greatest possible annoyance to themselves and others. Of such a class, on a grand scale, are the so styled heroes who, from time to time, have appeared on the theatre of the world only to deluge it with blood. Among those who have sought distinction in the paths of literature are found many whose whole life has been a tumult of controversy, and who, though not causing the same wide-spread devastation as the warrior, have also managed, in their own peculiar fashion, to let loose the fire-brands of discord among men; and the case is the same in the humbler sphere of ordinary life. We often meet with individuals who seem just made to annoy themselves and those around them. We do not allude to the "angry man," who takes fire like powder, and "goes off" on every trifling occasion; who is never at peace, like the Irishman, but when he is fighting;

whose whole life is a continual worry and snarl. The class we have in our eye may be denominated "offence-taking" people. From an unfortunate disposition to put a hasty construction upon acts and expressions of their friends and acquaintance, which they don't exactly see through, your offence-taking people cause an inconceivable amount of annoyance, personal and relative. They are ever ready to be displeased upon the slightest cause, or (which is oftener the case) without any cause at all. They are, as it were, quick flesh all over. You cannot touch them but they wince. An unpremeditated casual remark, which does not exactly square with their notions of self-dignity, they immediately set down as a deliberate and malicious attempt to give them annoyance. Their brain is ever on the rack for motives, and where none do or can exist,

> "Imagination gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name."

They thus inflict upon themselves a species of self-torture, not the less painful because it springs from imaginary wrong. This offence-taking aptitude is admirably ridiculed by Mercutio when he says to Benvolio :—"Thou ! why thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more or a hair less in his beard than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking

nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes. What eye but such an eye would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat; and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg for quarrelling. Thou hast quarrelled with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun. Didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? With another for tying his new shoes with old ribands?"

Individuals who thus, tinder-like, take offence on every trifling occasion, must, in general, be influenced either by over-sensibility or self-conceit. The former deserve our sympathy, the latter our contempt. Extreme sensibility, while in many cases the source of thrilling enjoyment, in many more is it the cause of exquisite pain. In pushing along the crowded thoroughfare of life, it must necessarily receive many a rude shock which, on less finely strung minds, make no impression; and it should ever be our most careful endeavour to avoid giving offence, even in appearance, to such sensitive spirits. Such is their natural constitution, and it is as unwise as it is cruel to cause them the slightest pain by look or word, which can be avoided. The self-ills that such sensitive natures create are sufficient without being added to by

the thoughtlessness and inhumanity of others. Of the misery which over-wrought sensibility inflicts on its possessor, we have a striking instance in the case of Cowper, showing that this is a plant of too tender a nature to flourish in the atmosphere of common life. Like some gentle flower of a sunny clime, transported from its native soil to chillier regions, it soon droops, withers, and dies beneath their ungenial influence. The quiet of retirement is its proper sphere; not solitude, but the happy circle of domestic peace, away from the bustling distractions of active life. Cowper, who shrunk with maiden-like timidity from the turmoil of the every-day world, was the poet who, with vigorous hand, lashed the follies and vices of the age, and almost every line of whose works tells that it is genuine metal from the mine of genius. When he threw up his Government appointment in disgust (in consequence of the necessity for his official appearance at the bar of the House of Lords), his sensitive spirit instinctively sought that retirement which his rare endowments consecrated to the improvement of mankind and his own immortal fame. Government thus lost an awkward servant, while another star was added to the galaxy of human intellect. When individuals of high-wrought sensibility, therefore, come into collision with us, we ought to make every allowance for the keen feelings they possess, and not to place to

the charge of ill-nature or self-conceit an infirmity over which, in a great measure, they have no control.

Upon the other hand, where the disposition or readiness to take offence evidently springs from an exacting self-conceit, sympathy is scarcely merited. The individual, elevated into a false estimation of himself, must necessarily feel displeased whenever the slightest remark is made, the slightest conduct exhibited which has the tendency to draw him down in his own eyes, or in the eyes of others, from his fictitious eminence. Nothing can be said or done but he immediately sets about discovering whether it can have any relation to *him;* and it is not at all wonderful, if, in the majority of cases, he sees that it has; for, with a predisposition to believe the worst, people generally think the worst. The wish is father to the thought. Such deserve no indulgence; and the annoyances and disappointments they feel are only the appropriate penalties of a morbid self-conceit. Like the ass in the lion's skin, they are at once seen through; their ridiculous aping of what is above them only excites diversion; and, like the donkey too, they are laughed at even by their own brethren. Self-conceit rides off with its unfortunate owner upon all occasions, hunting out matter of offence; and strange it would be, if it were not overtaken sometimes, nay, almost always, for

"All seems infected that the infected spy,
As all seems yellow to the jaundiced eye."

The little vermin that noble sportsmen pass unheeded, are weasel-like, seized upon by self-conceit, and cause just as much trouble and annoyance as things of greater importance. It is thus such individuals inflict their own punishment. The injuries that they themselves procure become their schoolmasters!

The man of humble pretensions, while alive to and jealous of his real dignity, allows not every petty annoyance to disturb him thus. Unlike his antipodes, his mind is not always poking about for hidden motives and meanings in the expressions and conduct of his friends. What he exercises himself he expects from others—an indulgent liberal-mindedness in forming opinions on human conduct; he has no wish to become his own tormentor; he seeks enjoyment, not annoyance, in the world; and he knows that the surest way to destroy the one and create the other is to be always on the lookout for matters of offence. The tree of the valley bids defiance to the howling blast, secure from injury by the very lowliness of its retreat, while that perched on the mountain eminence above is shaken to its roots by every passing breeze. Thus with the humility of good sense and the vanity of self-conceit. As regards offence-taking generally, how many of its bad effects might be

averted by a little mutual charity, a little timely explanation, a little magnanimity to make reasonable concessions, and a little yielding willingness to accept them? We once knew two gentlemen, associated in the most intimate terms of friendship, who, because of some trifling expression, meaningless and motiveless, made by one of them, which the other thought reflected upon him, were estranged for a number of years. The one whose over-sensibility or aptness to take offence instantly gave to the expression a meaning and an application which it was never intended to bear, became cold in his civilities to the other; and the hand that was wont to be held out in the most kindly friendship whenever they met, was now proffered with reluctant coldness. The other, altogether unconscious of the cause for his friend's change of manner, began to think that his friendship was no longer desired, and at length their mutual salutations were marked with equal frigidity. Even the formal handshaking was dropped: and by and by when they met, all that told of their once warm and confiding friendship was a distant, reserved nod. This also in time disappeared, and men, who in former years seemed to have but one heart, were now as much dissevered as two utter strangers. Individuals who knew them of course instantly set down the cause which could produce such results as one of no ordinary kind; for

many were as much astonished as if the summer stream, leaping and sparkling in the sun's warm rays, had been frozen into icy solidity before their eyes. It is difficult, however, where true friendship ever existed, to obliterate entirely its traces from the heart. In our hours of retirement, the phantoms of realities, long passed away, will haunt the breast; memory brings back former years; and the tones of those we once loved, but from whom we have been long estranged, thrill the soul with a melancholy pleasure. No Lethe is there so potent as to drown in complete oblivion the memory of bygone loves. Even below the icy mantle which years of separation have spread over former friendships, the waters of a still unquenched affection may be felt streaming; for "to be wroth with one we love, doth work like madness in the brain."

At length, the one who had conceived himself offended began to have some qualms of conscience about the propriety of his conduct; and this, once awakened, reflection from day to day only the more convinced him that he had acted hastily and wrong. The thought that he had injured his friend, and sacrificed his friendship causelessly, gained strength, till at last he determined on making the first advance to reconciliation. He sought an interview with his former associate, who, though surprised, guessed the

cause as if by intuition, and grasped, with all the warmth of a forgiving soul, the outstretched hand of his hasty and long-estranged friend. An explanation was speedily and satisfactorily given, and the intimacy which unreflecting, unindulgent aptness to take offence had sacrificed so long, was thereafter resumed with greater warmth than ever, and continued till death. This is but a simple illustration of an evil, the effects of which almost all have experienced in some degree, and which, under innumerable shapes and forms, contributes to embitter the cup of human happiness.

While enforcing the duty of mutual forbearance, these remarks are not meant to inculcate a tame submission to real injuries. To exhibit a truckling servility or pusillanimity under insult is not to exercise the virtue of charity, but to degrade the native dignity of the soul. When abject concessions are made to mortified vanity, they are only marrow to the little soul that exacts them, and but approximate our own to a like pettiness. The concession should be reasonable and manly, not tame and crouching. If, after reasonable advances on our part, a dogged obstinacy is maintained on the other, magnanimity has performed her duty; it is time to retire, and leave the unforgiving offence-taker, like a stomach surcharged with bile, to work his own cure. While as high-toned magnanimity may be shown in

making the first approach to reconciliation as in accepting it when offered, as much littleness of mind may be exhibited in pushing concession too far as in withholding or rejecting it altogether.

It was a glorious couplet that of Pope's, and well would it be for humanity were it treasured up in every human heart—

> "Good nature with good sense must ever join ;
> To err is human, to forgive divine."

A RAINY DAY AT ABERFOYLE.

BEING possessed in my youthful days with a great desire to rise in the world, I was an enthusiastic climber of high mountains. But having now attained to more mature years, I have got over all that, for I have learned long since that happiness does not dwell altogether on the tops of hills, but may more frequently be found at our feet, scattered in profusion over the plains and valleys—a reflection quite as appropriate, I apprehend, to the varied scenery of our social life as to the physical aspects of nature. This aimless mountain-climbing, indeed, I hold to be very much a bit of foolish emulation, involving a waste of breath and danger to your bones which cannot lead to any good; and you won't be one whit bigger a *man* even although you should stand upon the summit of Ben Nevis. And so of those ambitious people—whose name is legion—who would fain ascend to social altitudes for which nature never

meant them, having neither the amount of wind nor the strength of muscle requisite for the achievement. Envious and emulous of their more exalted fellows, they expend themselves in laborious attempts to attain the like position, and not unfrequently miss their footing and tumble headlong to the bottom, bruised and wrecked beyond redemption—a catastrophe that might have been avoided had they abode in their native plains and valleys, and there gathered, in quiet and contented modesty, the flowers and fruits of humbler but surer pleasures lying in their path. But the fable of the frog and the ox was true in men's experience long before the time of Æsop, and will likely continue to be so "as long as time its term extends," whatever moral homilies either I or any other great philosophers may indulge in touching the foolishness of such perilous performances.

Penetrated (as the French say) by these and similar sensible thoughts and convictions, and determined to eschew all toilsome hill ascents, I and two valued friends set out the other day to explore the strath of Aberfoyle, and bring ourselves into better acquaintanceship with this part of the famous country of Rob Roy. One of the two—the most unassuming and loveable man I know—had indeed his own private reasons, apart from health and curiosity, for wishing to retire to

the country for a brief space. He had just commenced the cultivation of a moustache, which was in the first incipient stages of its progress, and he resolved to see what fresh air and rural cream could do for it. The result was equally marvellous and gratifying, and ought to infuse hope and courage into the soul of every young man who is cultivating this manly appendage under difficulties, and wondering why it won't come. At first my friend's moustache was hardly visible to the naked eye, but after the lapse of two days it could be distinctly perceived without the aid of a glass. But this is *en parenthèse*, and I only mention the circumstance for the encouragement of any youth who is beginning to despair of achieving the "fierce dignity" of a moustache, that he may "go and do likewise."

Well, going by the Forth and Clyde Railway, we arrived at Bucklyvie, a most hungry and forlorn-looking place, distant about seven miles from Aberfoyle Inn, which was our goal. As there was only one mode of conveyance to be found at the locality, we adopted it, and accordingly trudged away on our legs in the direction of the famous clachan. The country all round, for a long way, is bleak enough in all conscience; but were the heather cleared away, and the moss drained, and tickled into anything like a genial mood by the application of lime and manure, I don't doubt it might bear

first-rate crops. The road, however is excellent, and nowhere have I seen the milestones—such interesting objects in the landscape to the weary traveller—in such perfect and creditable condition, for which I moved a vote of thanks to the Road Trustees on the spot, which was carried *nem. con.;* for whosoever has travelled much on foot, must have often been disgusted and provoked in coming up to a thing on the roadside, which should have been a milestone, but which, in respect of its obliterations, defacements, and disfigurements, might as readily be proved to be the remains of an ancient monument to one of the Pictish Kings. Having counted off three of these respectable landmarks in our journey, we begin to bear down upon the more fertile districts in which the "winding Forth" lies coiled like an immense serpent glittering in the autumn sun, folding yellow corn and green clover fields in its convolutions —now disappearing in the bosky umbrage of some wood—now flashing out amid the

> Calm and still light on yon great plain,
> That sweeps, with all its autumn bowers,
> And crowded farms, and lessening towers,
> To mingle with the bounding main.

Backed by the not very high and mostly well-clothed hills in the direction of Loch Katrine and Lochlomond, the scene is very beautiful, and, to a painter with an

eye and a soul behind it, offers many pictures well worthy of being transferred to canvas. But save us from photographic landscapes, into which the breath of life cannot be breathed, and which are destitute of the living soul. The atmosphere in which all natural objects float, so to speak, cannot be given by any mechanical process, however ingenious and accurate, but must pass through the mind of the artist to his brush; and it will be reproduced with truthfulness just in proportion to his genius. But this by the way. A sudden turn of the road where it branches off to the Lake of Menteith brought the Forth to our feet, and it thenceforth bore us company (though running away from us) all the way to Aberfoyle, where the road is all that comes between it and the hotel. At the bend aforesaid, a family of gipsies are encamped on a green and velvety nook under overarching trees, while the Forth is singing lullaby to the plentiful crop of squalling brats wherewith such establishments are invariably endowed. Very pastoral and picturesque-looking, no doubt, is this moveable place of abode, surrounded by such adjuncts, and under a fair sky and a smiling sun, but it has just too much ventilation for me. Moreover, when the rains beat, and the cold winds blow fierce and loud, it must be anything but comfortable to lie cowering and shivering over a few blackened sticks in the

way of fire that will smoke and will not burn; or, when a more than ordinarily great blast comes sweeping down the glen, and *strikes* their tent without leave asked, to be obliged to gather up the fragments of the frail tenement, and run for very life. No. On the whole, I prefer a dwelling-house of stone and lime, and covered with slate, whereon you can borrow money in case of emergency, and which forms a more eligible security for a lender as well against the elements. But "the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense," and, most likely, had I been born and brought up among the dwellers in tents, I might have found myself as miserable in any more formal habitation as does a Highlandman in his first pair of trousers. The gipsies, however, I suspect, would not feel at home in any other abode or in any other life; and, perhaps, there are elements of enjoyment and principles of compensation about it which the uninitiated cannot see.

We now turn into the inn, secure our beds, and partake of an excellent tea and "fixins," of which we stood much in need—then sally forth in the gloaming to take a quiet *coup d'œil* of the place and its environs. And here I may remark that its commercial importance is nothing to speak of. The only place of merchandise we could discover was a little home-made thatched roof shieling, fronting the road, which announced above the

door that it is "licensed to sell tea and tobacco," the window in which, of one foot and a-half square, being composed in all of four panes or "lozens." Not so long ago either since the great Rob was the great merchant of these parts, dealing extensively in horned animals and other stock, for which, however, he declined to pay if he could take them for nothing, looking upon payment, in fact, in hard coin, as a vulgar and derogatory proceeding, and only worthy of the man who hadn't a soul above a shopkeeper. *Tempora mutantur et mutamur in illis;* but whatever we may have done, I don't think we have changed to the worse in that respect; for although a great number of people in these days still look upon a creditor as a paltry kind of creature, whom they would never think of recognising, if he didn't think of recognising them, yet, as a rule, it is not counted discreditable to pay your debts; and I am rather of opinion that a good deal could be advanced to show that this is the truly honest and Scriptural course.

In passing along the road you will observe that, within a comparatively short distance, the Forth is crossed three or four times by as many ancient, hump-backed bridges, looking as if they had sustained some serious spinal injury in their youth, from which they had never recovered, and which old age had only aggravated. They exhibit, however, no signs of decrepitude, and the old

bones of them look firm enough and strong enough to bear the weight of many coming years. These old world structures are an admirable indication of what the architect's ideas of traffic were in those days, for they afford only room for one vehicle at a time, which not even a foot-passenger may try to pass without imminent risk of being jammed into a jelly. On either side of the road the fields and rivers are enclosed by strong and high wattle fences, meant, I suppose, for the protection of the game, and the construction of which, judging from the thickness of the wattles, must have been as laborious an operation as the building of any dry-stone dyke. But what is this, paddling and jumping across the road? A whole colony of frogs *en route* for the interior, from which I conclude that the game is up with us for the morrow. They may simply be on their way to some neighbour frog's home, to pay a friendly visit and talk over the affairs of frogdom, the births, deaths, marriages, and other casualties happening there, and which may be as interesting to them as similar events among ourselves are to us, not forgetting the sweet morsels of scandal, and backbiting, and detraction that make tea-parties, and such like gatherings, so fascinating and improving to enlightened minds. I know not; but of this I am certain, that you never saw a congregation of [illegible]cks crossing your path on a fair and quiet night,

without the following day being wet and stormy. My companions pooh-pooh the notion as superstitious and absurd, but the fact remains nevertheless; and the connection is greatly more obvious than between Tenterden steeple and Goodwin Sands, although I have not time just at present to set forth at length the reasons for the atmospheric faith that is in me. So I retire to my dormitory with very damp forebodings for the morrow, which, I regret to say, were more than realised.

Next morning I find there is little use in pulling up the blind of my bedroom window, except to see that a general blind is drawn across river, wood, field, and hill, far as the eye can reach, which is not far, for the blind is composed of a dense steaming mist, penetrated by a thick drizzling rain, which, to look at, makes you feel wet through and through in imagination. On reaching the breakfast-table I find my friends laying their heads together, gazing wistfully through the windows, and (feeling somewhat hopeful and courageous in the prospect of a good meal) expressing a strong conviction that it will "clear up," although, for my part, I cannot perceive the grounds of their opinion in the clouds or anywhere else. On the contrary, everything betokens a day that has thoroughly made up its mind to rain without remorse—to have a complete blow out. A noisy congregation of ducks in front of the window

are evidently of this mind, for they are waddling about and poking their beaks into every puddle, in the highest state of exhilaration—every now and again jerking their heads cloudwards as if returning thanks. A solitary calf, wandering up and down in a demented and forlorn condition, thinking the ducks are too hilarious in such dismal circumstances, and that they ought to have more regard for appearances, suddenly charges into their midst, scattering them with much clamour, right and left, after which achievement he retires to the side of the road and gazes over the fields with a melancholy expression of countenance. A peacock is wandering about also in dilapidated grandeur, utterly reckless of his fine plumage, which is all battered and bedraggled with the wet, looking as heartless and demoralized as some great swell who has lost all character, and taken to drink. Here a sudden gust of wind catches him by the tail and trundles him along the road at a rate much beyond his inclination, while he makes violent efforts to turn himself about, so as to bear with his head up against the blast—a mode of doing it, which, no doubt, he thinks more convenient than the other. Drizzle, drizzle, drizzle; drip, drip, drip; patter, patter, patter, swish! and the rain and the mist are rolled into sheets which envelop the landscape, and smite it with a dreary thud. But here is breakfast, which we proceed to

despatch with considerable appetite and much solemnity, it being impossible, even at this interesting performance, to shake off the funereal hue and feeling that colour and pervade everything within and without. Even the waiter, usually so alert, looks lifeless and desponding, as if he felt that the weather, in some mysterious way, would have a baneful influence on his expected gratuity. Unconsciously I find myself crooning over Longfellow—

> "The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
> It rains, and the wind is never weary.
> The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,
> But at every gust the dead leaves fall—
> And the day is dark and dreary.
>
> Be still, sad heart, and cease repining;
> Under the clouds is the sun still shining;
> Thy fate is the common fate of all,
> Into each life some rain must fall—
> Some days must be dark and dreary."

All very well that the sun is shining under the clouds, but what does that signify if it doesn't shine on *me?* It matters little to any fellow, long or short, who is crossing a moor with the storm in his teeth, and a black wrack of clouds overhead, covering his path with gloom and desolation to the far horizon. But notwithstanding this surly commentary, we know the deeper meaning of the singer's words, and picking up (or down) hope from a rift of light in yon northern clouds, we determine to

walk to Loch Ard, my friends still nursing the fond delusion that it will "clear up"; so we shoulder arms (that is, umbrellas) and march forth. Mist, like huge volumes of steam, enveloping the hill-tops; mist, like a fringe of white smoke, creeping along the river's edge; mist reeking over the distant fields, rich with the precious "stooks" lying prone and battered in the stubble. But through wind and wet, and feeling very gluey, we make Loch Ard, but scarcely in a frame of mind to admire the natural beauties of the place. Sometimes we take shelter under a tree, which we find to be worse than the open, when a gust of wind shakes the branches and sends the rain rattling about your head like a shower bath. Finding (which my friends at last reluctantly admit) that the weather is "settled," we return to the hotel to put in the dreary day as best we can. Here the only tolerable prospect we have is dinner, as there is nothing to read except a newspaper three weeks old, and some time-tables, the advertisements in which I read two or three times over. The Forth, on the other side of the road, is rising and roaring, red and turbid with the soil he brings with him from his upper course. And this puts me in mind of a circumstance that happened here not long since. Just on the other side of the hump-backed bridge, opposite our window, stands the parish manse, which being, as the minister (or

perhaps it was his wife) thought, unfit for habitation, he applied to the heritors for a new domicile. The Duke of Montrose is the only heritor, and he was determined to do no more than the law obliged him to do. The Presbytery of Dunblane, with the heritors' clerk, were appointed to inspect and report; and, in execution of their mission, they arrived at Aberfoyle (as bad luck would have it) on even a worse day than this, when the Forth was roaring from bank to brae, threatening to deluge the inn, and when the hump-backed bridge was becoming rapidly invisible beneath the waters. What was to be done? A cart was ordered, in which the brethren proceeded to cross the flood, and never before was such a weight of divinity lodged in such a vehicle. The clerk rather declined to join the expedition, considering discretion the better part of valour, and preferring to take his ease in his inn. I should like to have had a *carte de visite* of the reverend turn-out, which got back safely to the inn, after successfully accomplishing its mission, and where the holy men enjoyed a good dinner, and partook of a few reasonable jorums, which they had well earned.

Still raining; nothing to see; nothing to do. I am sick of this

> "Vacancy absorbing space,
> And fixedness without a place."

Nothing to read! By-the-bye, Deeds, fumble out that funny MS. you picked up at Dunoon quay the other week, and read it for the general behoof. Deeds accordingly pulls forth the following, which is dated "31 July, 1865," and subscribed "Peter Mahony, Egg Merchant, Candleriggs, Glasgow." Mr. Mahony had evidently been a sojourner, with his family, at that fashionable watering-place, and had dropped the composition from his pocket, and as it is creditable to his talents, I trust he will not feel offended at its being published to the present company. It is entitled

"MAHONY'S FAREWELL TO THE SEASIDE."

Farewill to the cost for the sayson,
  Farewill to the salt water say,
Which looks so subloime and so plazin,
  Behilt from the top of the quay.
No more
Will persaive the big breakers roar,
Nor quietly praymble along the say-shore.

How refreshin' to rise in the mornin'
  And plunge in the clare sparklin' foam,
With the sun up on high all adornin',
  And then prosaid laysurely home,
And ait
Your breakfast laid out on the cloth so nate
By your own little wife so smart an' complate.

Or along the fresh bache for to wander
  With WANN at the top of the poll,

Whose nate little fut makes you ponder,
  And in your poor heart puts a hole.
                Ach them gurls !
With their broight shinin' curls
Hanging over their purty white shouldthers in swurls.

Or to go out a fishin' and boatin',
  An' catchin' of whitins to try—
While you might, catchin' nought, its worth nothin',
  Be caught with a hook from an eye—
                Never mind,
It's the swatest sensation you'll find,
And love, we all know, tho' not deaf, is quite blind.

Then the poor little, dear little childther
  Rowl about, and get tanned red and brown ;
Poor Biddy, I thought it wud killed her,
  Seein' them poinin' away in the town ;
                Now aich little shark
Has a stomach, worth while to remark.
Fit to ait and degist the contents of the Ark.

But now I am off to the city,
  With its din, an' its durt, an' its pegs ;
With janius like moine, its a pity
  I should deal in butter and eggs ;
                But ochone,
It needn't be towld, for its very well known,
You'll find big men in shops and louts on a throne.

Och the cost is the place for enjoyment,
  No other place like it, I'm bound ;
But all must reshume their employment,
  And lave the salt say for dry ground.
                So I'm here,
With these swate recollecksuns to cheer,
The long round of work for another short year,
An' keep myself fresh in this quare atmosphere.

Thanks, good Peter; it may comfort you to know that your original lucubration helped to relieve the *tedium vitæ* of three desolate fellow-mortals at Aberfoyle. But the Inn is all dark and quiet; it is off to bed; the rain still prevails; and we retire also, resolved to be off with the first train from Bucklyvie in the morning. Morning wet as before; machined to the station. Bucklyvie more forlorn-looking than ever. Arrived in Glasgow at 10 A.M., with very moist remembrance of Aberfoyle, which is a pity, for I always like to part with a place, as with a person, pleasantly, it makes such a difference in the pleasures of memory. But we have seen what Aberfoyle would be in happier circumstances—a quiet autumn day, with an azure sky and a smiling sun—and we may yet return to bear away from it sunny memories for leisure hours.

A SEANCE WITH A SEQUEL.

It has long been subject of speculation and discussion among philosophers whether the lower animals have souls. The dog, the horse, the elephant, and many others, as is well known, have furnished striking illustrations of the possession of something marvellously like the reasoning faculty in man—something different from and superior to mere blind instinct. The ingenious author of the "Vestiges of Creation" is the great apostle of this theory; for it will be remembered that he proves, by a mass of recondite inductions and analogies, that the remote ancestor of man must have been a monkey, or a creature still lower in the scale of intelligence and physical organisation. This author has been recently followed, on the same side, by the learned Mr. Darwin, whose "Origin of Species" has set the whole philosophical world by the ears, and produced an array of treatises, *pro* and *con*, sufficient (when perused) to make

a man entertain serious doubts respecting his humanity. But, leaving these disquisitions aside, and also ignoring for the present the Turkish philosophy which assumes, as a matter of course, that women are not possessed of souls, we think the following surprising revelations will convince everybody who believes them that animals are endowed with spirits, and that they are as well entitled to them too as a large number of the higher class of bipeds who assume to be "lords of the creation." The Hindu doctrine of the transmigration of souls is well known, which maintains that the spirits of human beings, in proportion to their delinquencies in the flesh, are doomed at death to pass into the bodies of animals, superior or inferior as the case may be, and to ascend by slow gradations and a process of moral purgation to their proper "sphere." Whether the revelations I am about to record have anything to do with such a metempsychosis I cannot pretend to say, and the reader must just accept them for what they are worth, but as the narrative of an impartial eye-witness, who has no interest on the one side or the other. It is likely the narrative may provoke furious opposition in some quarters, and contempt in more. For this I am prepared, remembering that it has been the invariable fate of all great discoveries to be so welcomed by the world. Further, if I am asked to explain how such things can

be, I must just answer, "The reason why I cannot tell," as I deem it at all times at once more candid and philosophical to confess ignorance in a single word than to prove it by long explanations, showing that I know nothing whatever of the subject—a common mode now-a-days of procuring a learned reputation. But before any sceptic ventures to thrust aside with contempt the following mysterious facts *because they cannot be explained*, let him reflect how really little he knows of the great physical facts of the world around him. Can he explain the law of gravitation—why an apple falls down and not up? He may give us a long array of *words*, but not come one pin-point nearer the *thing*. Can he explain what electricity is? or heat? or light? or attraction and repulsion? Did he ever see the wind, even although he may have helped to *raise* it? If his answer to all these queries must be a dumb negative, let him modestly pause before consigning to contempt the innumerable "things in heaven and earth that are not dreamt of in his philosophy."

The *modus operandi* of Celestial Telegraphy (I consider this a more appropriate appellation than Spirit Rapping or Spiritualism) has been so frequently described, and is now so well known, that I need not detain my readers with any preliminary details of the following interesting *séance;* suffice it to say, that the

occurrences here set forth took place in a most respectable mansion in the West-End of Glasgow, and in presence of a highly-intelligent and veracious company of gentlemen, among whom there could be no possibility of collusion. The room having been darkened to "a dim, religious light," as is usual in such cases, and the company, with the medium, being seated round a capacious table, the medium put himself *en rapport* with the coming spirits in the usual manner. After a solemn pause of three or four minutes, three emphatic knocks were heard upon the table, signifying that a spirit was in waiting. Thereupon the following interesting communications took place:—

Who are you?—I am the spirit of one of the geese who saved Rome.

How many geese composed that famous company?—Three hundred and twenty-five.

You must have made a considerable noise when all your voices were "lifted up" at once?—Rather.

Are you all together in your present sphere?—Yes, on account of that heroic achievement.

Could any number of geese save Rome now?—No; within three years Victor Emmanuel's troops will occupy the Vatican, and the Pope will be in blank.

How many of your brethren (and sisters) might be sacrificed within England this present Christmas?—435,976.

Do you approve of such an annual immolation?—It does not matter whether I approve of it or not, it is likely to continue as long as men and geese inhabit the earth.

What is your chief employment in your present sphere?—To walk at large and cackle all day long.

Do you know any animals of higher pretensions who follow the same occupation *here?*—Yes; many.

What affords you most satisfaction in your visits to this lower sphere?—To see an honest man, with his happy wife and family, seated round their Christmas goose.

Do you, as a spirit, promote their enjoyment?—Yes; the spirit of each departed goose hovers, like an incense, over its mortal remains, and, according to the hearts and tempers of the guests, blesses the savoury feast.

What do you do principally when "revisiting the glimpses of the moon"?—Support and strengthen our terrestrial brethren in their last struggles; and as I see one just seized and about to be strangled like a Turk, I must be off.

And so exit the goose.

After a brief pause, the premonitory tapping was heard again.

Who are you?—Something much like yourself.

What is that?—Quack.

Oh yes, I see, you are the spirit of a duck?—Yes, the spirit of a duck, who sailed in Noah's Ark.

Did you mean anything personal by your first answer? —Being a disembodied spirit, I cannot be personal; but that's quite immaterial.

Here the table began to get restive, and made many attempts to take the feet from the company with its legs; but a little work table, standing in the corner of a room, suddenly sprang across, and, jumping up, gave it a great knock with its top, whereupon the big table became as quiet as a church at midnight, and the communications were resumed.

What was the cause of the present interruption?—Quack.

Was it owing to your dislike to any one present?—Quack, quack.

What is your private opinion of the great spirit medium who is never far from HOME?—Quack, quack, quack.

And as nothing more could be obtained from this obdurate and uncomplimentary "deuk," he departed to join his fellow-spirits in the mysterious regions of Quackdom.

After another brief pause, a few gentle taps were again heard.

Who are you?—The spirit of Cock Robin, "whom the sparrow shot with his bow and arrow."

What became of the said sparrow?—He occupies, like all evil-doers in the spirit world, a very low sphere.

With whom does he chiefly consort?—With bats, owls, and other unclean animals.

Do you feel for his punishment?—Yes, and would give him a lift if I could to a better sphere.

Why?—Because I think he meant to shoot the cuckoo, not me; and I think neither sparrows nor men should be badly punished for doing wrong without intention.

Do you ever see the robin who has endeared himself to all children's hearts by his immortal kindness to the "Babes"?—Yes, he and I have a sphere to ourselves; and as I hear him calling now, I am gone.

Another pause, and then a few almost inaudible taps.

Who are you?—The spirit of a mouse long gathered to his fathers.

What is the use of mice?—I reply by asking, What is the use of men?—To live. Then the same answer applies to mice.

But mice are generally counted vermin, and they don't make good pies?—That is precisely the opinion held by mice regarding men.

Has ever any of your race been distinguished?—Yes, a man of the name of Burns one day unwittingly broke up the domestic establishment of one of my kin with

his plough-share, and embalmed the incident in verses as immortal as himself.

Do you feel proud of the fact?—Yes, and of the man.

What sort of a sphere do you occupy?—A cheese, of which the circumference is boundless.

Are there any traps there?—I should say not. Traps are the dirty invention of paltry man.

After putting a variety of other questions, and no answer being returned, it was evident that the mouse, for reasons best known to himself, declined farther conversation.

The *séance* was about to be broken up, when a succession of raps were heard, louder than any that had preceded, from which it was inferred that a still more distinguished spirit was anxious to unburden his mind. Nor was the inference erroneous.

Who are you?—The spirit of the donkey celebrated by the poet Coleridge.

What is your opinion of the condition of donkeys generally?—That it is very low.

Do they deserve better treatment?—They couldn't get worse; but sometimes their owners are inferior to themselves, and this may account for it.

How should they be treated?—With kindness, not blows. "Your dull ass won't mend his pace with

beating." I need not remark that it is not the first time a donkey has quoted Shakespeare.

Kindness?—Yes, kindness, not beating, is the great secret of getting the greatest amount of work out of either men or asses.

What becomes of the bodies of dead donkeys, since it is as rare to see one as to hear of a hangman dying?—Inquire at the sausage-maker, and don't believe him.

It is objected that your vocal organ is not musical?—That is a matter of taste; it is true it is not flexible, and is chiefly strong in the lower notes; but it answers its purpose fully as well as many organs with much higher claims.

Have you anything further to communicate?—No, except to advise you to read an article on asses in the *Cornhill* for January, from the perusal of which you will rise with greater respect for the mental abilities and social claims of my much-abused and much-maligned brethren—the very negroes of quadrupeds.

Here the table again began to move, but this time with greatly increased vigour. In its violent rockings and tumblings, it jerked the medium from his chair to the top of a sideboard, covered with crystal and *liqueur* bottles at the other end of the room, which were smashed to pieces, causing a great destruction of spirits. It then suddenly made for the door, and was with difficulty

restrained by four strong men (the medium being incapable). Finding itself thus baulked, it twisted off its legs, which almost went through the ceiling owing to the great force with which they were projected upwards. It then threw itself on its back, and shuffled along the floor towards the door, but, finding it could not obtain egress, returned to the centre of the room, and was making strenuous efforts to recover its legs, when one of the party, getting alarmed, turned on the gas; in a moment the commotion ceased; and so the *séance* ended.

I will add nothing by way of comment, except this, that the answers obtained from the various spirits seem to me to be even more sensible and important than any obtained at any *séance* recorded in the annals of spirit-rapping—I beg your pardon, celestial telegraphy.

A Sequel.

THE SPIRITS.

Lately on a midnight dreary,
Sitting by the fire so cheery,
Listening to the storm that beat and blew
With blustering gust and roar;
While I sat serenely smoking,
Suddenly there came a knocking,
As of some one rudely poking,

Poking at my chamber door—
" 'Tis some dirty ill-bred spirit
Knocking at my chamber door—
Only that and nothing more."

But to face the audacious knocker
I seized the shining poker,
While my heart went jumping, thumping,
As I never felt before ;
For through the storm's loud shrieking
I heard high voices speaking—
'Tis some thief's ghost that is sneaking
On the outside of the door—
Some vile spirit entrance seeking
By the keyhole of the door—
This perhaps and nothing more.

Hesitating then no longer,
Presently my legs grew stronger,
And, brandishing the poker,
I strode towards the door ;
When, without one word of fable,
The ponderous parlour table
Marched as fast as it was able
Right across the parlour floor ;
Danced across the room, and then assumed
Its post beside the door—
Which is true, and something more.

Outside louder grew the knockings,
Till I shook within my stockings,
And then there came a thundering bang,
Far louder than before ;
While the ponderous parlour table

Danced as fast as it was able,
Kicking up a noise like Babel,
Which I could not well explore;
Let my legs be firm a moment,
And this mystery explore—
'Tis a drunk man, nothing more.

For now I well remember,
In the dark days of December,
Full many a drouthy crony
Proceeds from door to door—
Pouring forth the flowing whisky,
And, thereby getting frisky,
Plays many a curious plisky,
And raises many a splore—
It may be spirit rappers
On t'other side the door—
Only that and nothing more.

So pulling up my breeches,
With many tugs and hitches,
I turned the key within the lock
And opened wide the door,
When arose a mighty bawling,
And a sudden stick came mauling,
That sent me quickly sprawling,
Sprawling on the parlour floor;
And I said *that* spirit rapping
I very much deplore—
I think I rather swore.

And, shouting for a bobby,
Till my voice rang through the lobby,
I made efforts to collect myself

Lying spilt upon the floor;
But it's a fact outrageous
That no guardian beak courageous,
With whiskers so umbrageous,
Hears, however loud you roar;
So, assisted by the poker,
I crawled towards the door—
Darkness there and nothing more.

Still the table it kept prancing,
And a private hornpipe dancing,
As if its soul rejoiced to see
The sufferings that I bore.
Wrathful at the wooden joker,
I smashed it with the poker,
When the loud tumultuous knocker
Fled from my chamber door,
Shouting, to spirit rappers,
"Never open wide your door anymore."
And I murmured, "Nevermore!"

THE PENNY DAILIES.

I HAVE now before me a dingy old newspaper called the *Glasgow Journal*, published 30th October 1752. Its size, like the character of its contents, is very moderate. It consists of two folio leaves, each measuring about 18 inches long by 12 broad; it contains no "leaders," which I consider a great improvement on our present system; but is wholly made up of very small paragraphs of very small news, somewhat ancient before it reached the printers' hands, and quaint medleys of advertisements. The following announcement, however, concerning the movements of a certain "German Lairdie," who, notwithstanding the magnificent estate to which his dynasty had been called, seems to have left his heart behind him in the original "kail-yardie," is full of a meaning and importance for these islands, which we in these later times have been able to make [illegible] and understand in the light of the nation's history

since :—"Thursday, a messenger arrived from Hanover at the Secretary's office with certain advice that his Majesty had declared his intention to set out for his British dominions on the 13th of next month." This is our second George, the ancestor of that royal Widow whose "crown is now a lonely splendour," and to whom, in her great grief, a wealth of love and deep sympathy has flowed out such as Sovereign never deserved or received before. An approaching marriage in high life is announced in this wise :—"October 21. Next week his Grace the Duke of St. Albanes will be married to Miss Roberts, a beautiful young heiress with a fortune of £125,000." A marriage nearer our own doors is given thus :—"Last week was married James Dennistoune of Colgrene, Esq., to Miss Mally Lyon, a beautiful young lady with a handsome fortune." I don't observe that where the lady happened to be plain, or ugly, or poor, that the circumstance is chronicled ; and perhaps it might be the case in these times, as it is sometimes in our own, that a very plain woman would be considered a beautiful young lady if possessed of £125,000, or a handsome fortune. Not much method is observed in the arrangement of this Lilliputian broad sheet, for these interesting announcements are mixed up "quite promiscuous" with fine takes of herrings, an account of petrified icicles (stalactites?) in a limestone quarry, and

the current price of meal, which lends a pleasing variety to the contents, and keeps up the attention of the reader. An enterprising "merchant" thus advertises his wares; though how such a multifarious collection of goods, over and above those "too tedious to mention," could be contained in a "first story," puzzles the imagination to conceive; and we rather think it cannot have been Andrew's first story:—"To be sold by Andrew Gardner at the Golden Ball, the first story of that tenement of land above Bell's-wynd, Glasgow, the following goods just arrived, at reasonable rates, viz.:—Exceeding fine hops, crop 1751 and present crop 1752, Dr. Godfrey's cordial for coughs, Daffey's elixir, the only true Stoughton elixir, famous British oil, London pomat, chocolate, the only true annodyne necklace for breeding children's teeth, best eating oil, jessamine oil, cucumbers, capers, olives, anchovies, India soy, barberries, vermicelli, harthorn shavings, split and whole peas, fine salt loaves, true French hungary water, plain and scented hair powder, plain gilt and mourning paper, all the sizes used, finest sealing wax and wafers, wax candles, small do. for smoking, the only true Mogul cards, flambeaus, decanting crans, steel wig machines, powder machines, neat gold weights, almond powder, Spanish snuff, Spanish [illegible]g for plate, sponge, children's and China [illegible], fine silk girdles for ladies, wax cloth, rot stone,

battle doors and shuttle cocks, German and other flutes, London razors, hones and German razor strops, corn plaister, German shoe balls, cabinet handles, sash knobs, curtain rings, finest vinegar, mustard, various sorts of brushes, mops, and a great many other goods usually sold by him," as before premised, "too tedious to mention." Does not the above enumeration, not to speak of the portentous addendum, take away your breath? Is not the above-named Gardner a jolly merry Andrew? And if the contents of his first story don't beat a Yankee store all to sticks, I'm a Dutchman!

Ah well! it is a long time since the 30th of October, 1752, and Andrew and his wares have long since returned to their original dust. What changes the world has witnessed in the interval! And, among the many revolutions that have taken place, not the least is that which has happened to newspapers. The little *Glasgow Journal*, which our great grandfathers perused with much satisfaction as they sipped their morning coffee, has disappeared, and has been succeeded by sheets which might cover a bed, and would fairly have frightened it out of existence had it survived till these times. The *Argus* can no more see or be seen; the *Chronicle* is itself chronicled among the things that were; the *Constitutional* has died for want of circulation; the *Courier* has coursed away into

space; the *Commonwealth* has gone to pieces, and yet the Government and the British Empire continue to hold together and prosper; the *Goosedubs Luminary* has been snuffed out, and yet things in general remain as bright as ever. Many of these changes have come about in the ordinary course of newspaper nature; and the departure of some of our old organs, which, like some street organs, had become very wheezy, is not matter for very deep regret. Being limited in compass, their pipes and stops got out of order by everlasting grinding of the same old tunes, making horrible discord on the public ears, and so the machine had to be shut up for the benefit of mankind. But *the* great change of all has undoubtedly been brought about through the influence of a humble copper, commonly called a penny. "For the small charge of one penny (a dozen for 9d.) you may walk up," as the showman says, and behold, daily, a panorama of the world's passing history. For such a ridiculously small consideration, every morning, with the regularity of fate, are scattered over the length and breadth of the land immense news-sheets, "thick as the leaves that strew the vale of Vallombrosa," or the snowflakes descending on the winter landscape, and that suggest innumerable feather-beds being emptied in the upper air. In consequence of a penny "our own correspondent" is to be found in

every corner of the inhabitable and uninhabitable world; up the Peiho hobnobbing with mandarins and the Son of the Moon; bivouacking now with the Federals, and now with the Southerns, and, amid the roar of artillery and the rattle of musketry, noting down his experiences for home consumption; at the bottom of a coal-mine, picking up the materials of a "tremendous accident"; at a fire, diligently scribbling, by the light of a flaming street, the particulars of a "disastrous conflagration"; at a coroner's inquest collecting the story of a "shocking murder"; at an "execution," where, it must be confessed, he sometimes depicts the anatomical agonies and contortions of the poor wretch's last moments with revolting minuteness. But where is he not? and Echo inquires—where? Besides all these, and similar stirring and exciting chronicles, wherein females (of both sexes) so much delight, you have "able leaders" upon every possible and impossible subject, from theology to a miserable bankruptcy; foolish reports of the foolish proceedings of small, but very consequential, rural Town Councils; reports of endless soirees (some given by employer to employed, and at which the said employer blows his trumpet pretty loud in praise of his own establishment, all which being intended as an advertisement, should be honestly paid for as such); reports of presentations and testimonials,

inter alia "to a gentleman of whom it may be said, we ne'er shall look upon his like again"; reports of Presbytery meetings, at which, mayhap, a petrified D.D. pulls up one of the younger brethren for giving forth an "uncertain sound"; Parliamentary reports "in their season," as the bill of fare says in the restaurant. And then the "correspondence!" Here you see a local patriot protesting in indignant language against orange-skins being flung on the pavement, as being fraught with imminent danger to the skins of the lieges, and invoking the majesty of the law in that behalf; another, inveighing in equally strong terms about the state of the city sewage, a fertile as well as a fertilizing subject; another, who writes vehemently about smoke, calling upon the Legislature to put it down, notwithstanding which, as a general rule, it continues to go up; another (very likely a young man who has been jilted by a pretty girl with a neat ankle), exclaiming in strains of virtuous wrath against the enormity of crinoline, and demanding what it is going to come to;—and these are only specimens of the epistolary flood wherein the editor of a penny daily is daily submerged. Then you have all the local paragraphs and ordinary staple of a newspaper, interspersed with a case of wife-beating and an essay on the fine arts. Everything, "from a needle to an anchor," as the saying is, may be found

reflected in this wonderful penny microcosm; and while the editorial pen can trace, in rotund sentences, all sorts of political revolutions, the fate of governments, and the rise and fall of empires, it does not disdain, occasionally, to turn off a neat paragraph in praise of the self-acting poker, which he justly maintains is greatly superior to every other poker hitherto invented. Very wonderful, truly, is this daily penny's-worth; and I don't envy the editor who has to keep the whole going. "For ever climbing up the climbing wave"—often doomed, like the Israelites of old, to make bricks without straw—to say something that shall look important, when he has nothing to say—to write with great warmth on subjects about which he doesn't care a button—to supervise, select, clip, reject; I say that, to all this, the stone of Sysiphus was a joke, and a turn upon the treadmill rather a pleasant recreation.

Well, it used to be the march, but of a verity, it is now the gallop, of intellect. Still, I like that word "march," it conveys to the mind's ear a sound as of the firm, steady-going, inevitable tramp of armed men, invincibly going forward to the achievement of their purpose; and, being a jog-trot sort of old fogey myself, I don't care about galloping in any direction. I don't know that, although knowledge now flows down our streets like a river, in the shape of penny papers, it is all

clear gain. I am afraid they are becoming our chief mental pabulum, and engendering a sort of dissipation which requires to be guarded against as well as alcoholic stimulants. There may be too much writing, as well as too much speaking; for what is writing, but speaking in another form? and we all know the newspapers themselves have frequently tried, by eloquent and stinging objurgations, to abate the everlasting cataract of windy commonplaces and exploded nonsense poured forth upon the public, without compunction, from platform, parliament, and other rostrums. A never-satisfied craving for "something new" has taken possession of us, we are shot through the age with the rapidity of an express train, only stopping two or three times a-day to coal and take in water; and I, albeit "the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time," am "birled" down the "ringing grooves of change," without time to see or think. To think? ay, there's the rub! For a man may read, and read, and read, till he reads himself stupid, and unfit himself, by over-indulgence in "skinkin ware that jaups in luggies," for the more solid nutriment necessary to his mental stamina. I make no complaint against the penny papers; most of our City papers are conducted with great ability, principle, and independence; and they are just obeying the law of mercantile development in supplying the

public with what the public demands. Yet we all know that appetite grows by what it feeds upon; and there is reason to suspect that very much of this anonymous intellect, now so profusely squandered in the evanescent columns of the dailies, and which, in other times, might have made the fame, if not the fortune of the authors, just, metaphorically speaking, "goes in at the one ear and out at the other." I hope it is all for the best; and that, as penny papers are now as much an established institution as the penny postage, they may do an equal amount of good in their way; and this will be accomplished greatly by those of them which are presided over by Intellect, Integrity, and Taste, writing out of existence the baser sort that live by pandering to the passions and prejudices of their readers. Still, I must end with a sigh of regret for the good old times, when the arrival of the substantial and respectable "Weekly" was looked for with eagerness at home; when paterfamilias, in the midst of the assembled family, read aloud the contents with solemn pleasure; when, after thus doing duty here, it found its way across oceans and continents, and was welcomed by distant friends as a much prized remembrancer of the old folks and the old land; and when, in short, news *was* news.

N.B.—I may mention, in confidence, that I am

acquainted with a most zealous and pious clergyman, who holds very strong views on the subject of Sabbath desecration, expressing the same, on occasion, in the most uncompromising terms; and I have seen the above devout man enjoying, I hope with the greatest moral improvement, his "penny daily" and hot rolls to breakfast on Monday mornings (he was very particular about the rolls), being, of course, conscientiously convinced that both were wholly produced on the previous Saturday. How, on any other hypothesis, could his serene satisfaction with the efforts of the printer and baker, be accounted for?

THE VILLAGE FLOWER-SHOW.

RICH AND POOR.

"Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor."

LAST summer I was spending a few days in a nice little country village in East Lothian, with my friend the doctor—the clergyman, the principal draper, and himself, constituting the aristocracy of the place. To one, like myself, in "populous city pent" during the most of the year, the change from the turmoil of a large town to the Sabbath quiet of a breezy rural retreat at the foot of the famous Lammermoors, was very pleasant and soothing, at least while the novelty lasted; for, with the rush of city life in one's ears, the unvarying quiet and absence of incident in such a comparative lotus-land by-and-by become monotonous to a regular town-dweller, and one sighs to be once more among the

flesh-pots of Egypt. Still, there is great force in use; and, seeing that small things are great in little places, one might soon come, like the villagers themselves, to "take the rustic cackle of their bourg for the great wave that echoes round the world."

The lord of the manor there (the Marquis of T.) is a nobleman who meddles little with politics, makes no conspicuous figure in the great "National Palaver," as Carlyle irreverently calls Parliament, but employs himself quite as usefully, perhaps. Not given to much speaking, "wherein," as an ancient man of wisdom says, is "foolishness," he is rather one who, by his unostentatious practical example and influence, does a vast amount of good, of which the world hears little, but is not the less benefited on that account. In a word, he is an enthusiastic agriculturist, and thinks it not beneath his dignity and ambition to try to make two blades of corn grow where only one grew before—a problem quite as worthy of pursuit as the philosopher's stone or the *elixir vitæ*, and more likely, upon the whole, to be followed by beneficent results. Such an ambition may possibly not be considered very lofty by many modern swells and fine gentlemen, whose time and mental abilities are absorbed in their whiskers. But never mind. Being a scientific agriculturist, too, and full of his subject, his lordship has given to the

world not a few ingenious appliances, whereby the husbandman's toil is lessened, and the fertility of his fields increased. Not the least benefit conferred upon his people is the spirit of emulation inspired by his example, for, retaining in his own hands a large "home farm," he shows them, experimentally, what science and intelligence combined may accomplish; and the result is that, not in the "garden of Scotland," as East Lothian has been not inappropriately called, are better cultivated and enclosed fields or finer crops to be found. Where that is the case, it is needless to add that the farmers are like their work—thriving and comfortable. It does one's heart good to see this "working" nobleman going about among his farmers, taking a kindly interest in all their projects and operations, suggesting an improvement here, an alteration there, and not above taking a hint for his own guidance from a sunburnt, horny-handed son of the soil who, in the course of his rough contact with the mother of us all, has stumbled upon a thing or two worth knowing—for agriculture, like genius, is a great *leveller*, and here, as elsewhere, it is not the first time the peasant has taught the peer.

While the province and delight of my lord thus lies chiefly among his fields and farmers, the special sphere of his worthy wife lies among the villagers. The "big house" is about half-a-mile to the east of the village,

and is approached through a "bosky umbrage" of gigantic and aristocratic trees, with a sparkling river to the right, glinting through the green and quiet gloom. Passing up this noble avenue seems like entering the Cathedral of Nature, through which thousands of feathered choristers are pouring strains of joyous music, echoed and re-echoed through the "long drawn aisles" of trees, till we feel

> "Each cloud-capped mountain is a holy altar;
> An organ breathes in every grove;
> And the full heart's a psalter
> Rich in deep hymns of gratitude and love."

> "How the silver chorus weaves in the sun and 'neath the eaves,
> While from dewy clover fields comes the lowing of the beeves.
> And the summer in the heavens is afloat!"

The contiguity of the "big house" to the village is happily symbolical of the nearness of its noble occupants to the villagers in sympathy and helpfulness, for the former ever take a kindly interest in their welfare. Methought, when I have seen this noble pair, surrounded by their family, proceeding to the simple parish church of a Sunday, receiving and acknowledging the respectful and affectionate greetings of their humble neighbours, taking their seats among the honest country folks, and listening reverently to the orthodox, though not very stirring discourse of the good old preacher,

that the sight has done me quite as much good as the sermon. For, knowing that their religion is not of the kind that goes to church and stops there, and then is put carefully aside, like a Sunday coat, for the rest of the week, I took their presence in that simple house of prayer—with the "rude forefathers" of the hamlet sleeping quietly outside beneath many a grassy mound—as a beautiful acknowledgment that riches and rank, toil and poverty, are at least equal there; and, for myself, it gave me a more lively sense of the presence of the Great Father to see those whom He had made the *social* parents of so many, and whose week-day life was an eloquent commentary on their Sabbath professions, devoutly joining in the somewhat unsteady but heartfelt songs of praise raised by the good parson and his flock to Him whose children we all are. And here I may take leave to say (putting politics, for which I have no taste, far away) that I have found many good and kind people among the higher classes; nay, I am inclined to believe, on a pretty wide induction, that the hearts of people of wealth and rank are composed of very much the same materials as those of their brethren lower down in the social scale; and that they only want to know each other a little better to be convinced that Nature did not mean them to be enemies but good friends. And I think I see in these present times many

symptoms that such a beneficent knowledge is on the increase. May it grow! And, after all, my worthy friend of the "advanced school," I do not consider it a heinous offence to be born to a title, a fine estate, and thirty thousand pounds a year; at least, had such a calamity happened to me, I would have consoled myself with the reflection that it was no fault of mine, and I do not think that, upon reaching the years of discretion, and being in a position to reason about the thing deliberately, I would have displayed much alacrity, or, indeed, any inclination at all, to rid myself of such a pleasant burden. For, whatever philosophers, preachers, and others, who have neither, may say of wealth and station, these *are* good things; and poverty, although no crime, is exceedingly inconvenient. But, as I take it, the highest good of such worldly advantages is their power to create a wealth and station better than themselves; and it is only when people in high places come to see more generally, like the nobleman and noblewoman of whom I have spoken, that the "luxury of doing good" outweighs a thousand times the dissipations and frivolities of fashionable life, that they will find their money and their good deeds have been put into a bank that never breaks—that always pays a sure dividend—where "neither moth nor rust corrupt, and thieves (unlike the case of some other banks) do not

break through and steal," and that a double lustre is added to their coronets—

> "Howe'er it be, it seems to me
> 'Tis only noble to be good—
> Kind hearts are more than coronets,
> And simple faith than Norman blood."

I do not mean the fussy kind of beneficence that cannot show itself unless preceded or followed by a flourish of trumpets (though we may take that and be thankful), but rather the kind of good doing that "droppeth as the gentle dew from heaven," and which is to be tracked by the blessings which spring up in its path, silently, like flowers.

The patiently courteous reader, however, may now be inclined to ask what has all this to do with a village flower-show? I cannot tell how it is, but so it is, that flowers always put me in mind of good deeds; for, like flowers, they are beautiful to behold, they fill the heart and the social atmosphere all around with a divine fragrance; and the breast where such flowers never bloomed is sterile soil indeed. But they may bloom anywhere; and is not the rose and the honeysuckle in the poor man's garden as beautiful in their own way as the more gorgeous flowers that grow in the gardens of rank and opulence?

"Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous,
God hath written in the stars above,
But not less in the bright flowerets under us
Stands the revelation of His love.

"Bright and glorious is that revelation
Written all over this great world of ours,
Making evident our own creation
In these stars of earth—these golden flowers.

"In all places, then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons,
How akin they are to human things."

Thus is it, my dear friend, that I have been led into these remarks by the village flower-show—the show itself being one of the many good deeds for which the village is indebted to the lord of the manor, and, more particularly, his worthy wife; for, as I have said, the village and the villagers are her peculiar province. Many of the poor have her name written on their hearts in acts of attentive kindness and generous bounty; and all look up to her with respect and affection. To those whose worldly comforts are but few, and whose sole heritage is toil, a kind word, where the heart is seen to be in the eye and felt to be in the tone, is a kind deed; and blessed is she who has the will and the wisdom to administer it aright. Knowing from her intelligence and experience that there are many ways of

helping the poor besides through the pocket, she has, among other means for that end, established among her villagers a flower-show, at which prizes are distributed among the competitors; and all the country-side feel a lively interest in this periodical battle of the flowers—a battle not so grand and sounding as some of which you and I have read, but much more bloodless, and, upon the whole, quite as beneficial.

Well, it was while I was staying last summer in this pleasant little village that one of the shows took place. The villagers, in their intervals of toil, had laboured for many weeks beforehand in their small gardens to do justice to the occasion, tickling their little plots, as Jerrold says, with their hoes till the ground fairly laughed again in flowers. It was fine to see the innocent enthusiasm displayed in the cultivation of dahlias, tulips, roses, calceolarias, wallflowers, sweetwilliams, pelargoniums, fuchsias, auriculas, polyanthuses, etc. Fine to see the zeal with which an unfortunate chicken or small dog, that might chance, in a fit of abstraction, to wander too near the sacred "beds," was chased in quick ignominy from the spot—a stray turnip, or other handy missile, hurtling after it as it vanished through the hedge; fine to listen to the precise and solemn injunctions laid upon the children not to venture near or meddle with the flowers, otherwise disastrous conse-

quences might follow to the delinquent; and not the least interesting sight to be seen, now and again, was the Marchioness, accompanied by some of her daughters, taking a look at a few of the gardens, and bestowing a word of commendation and a smile of encouragement upon the humble horticulturist. Such a word and such a smile might haply cause another flower to bloom, which is not to be found in the system of Linnæus, or any other learned botanist; and how cheaply is it planted!

The large hall of the village inn—whose posting establishment consists of one gig (which at that time had a broken wheel) and a hearse—was the exhibition-room. This hall was decorated for the occasion by his lordship's gardener with all manner of flowers and evergreens, and truly formed a beautiful *coup d'œil;*—for the gardener is a man of taste and intelligence, and, as much from inclination as in compliance with wishes from head-quarters, he also takes an interest in and promotes the floricultural emulation of the villagers by his practical experience and advice. And here I must not omit to mention that the show combines the *utile cum dolce;* for the noble patroness has not overlooked the fact that mankind, particularly the poorer portion of them, cannot live upon flowers altogether; and, therefore, the more useful vegetables also compete, and form

part of the show. Beans, peas, turnips, cauliflower, potatoes, parsnips, etc., were there; and my friend the doctor had a lot of onions on view, whose corpulence made the eyes of the spectators, especially competitors, water. On a table running up the centre of the room, and on tables running all round it, were displayed flowers in gorgeous bouquets, and flowers in great and little pots, numbers of them ticketed, for the judges had previously examined the various specimens, and the tickets announced the prizes. All the gentility of the village and the country round was there; and as I walked up and down, contemplating the scene, I felt it hard to say which flowers were the most beautiful—those on the benches, or the fresh, buxom lasses, with their laughing eyes and pouting lips, although my preference rather leaned to the flowers that walked, and talked, and smiled about the room—an opinion which I could see was also entertained by some strapping youths, between whom and not a few of the last-mentioned flowers a telegraphic understanding seemed to exist, as was evident when their bright eyes met. Being an old fogey, I am privileged to make these allusions with impunity; and, looking to my harmless position as such in society, I am sure not one of those pretty girls will feel offended when I say that they formed a very great attraction to the show, and added vastly to its

grace and interest. The mirth and good humour that abounded on every side, even among the unsuccessful competitors, were a testimony to the gentle and humanising influence of such exhibitions; and when a town-bred lady who was present, and who probably had never seen leeks before, except in soup, inquired, in honest simplicity, if they ever grew into onions, such a chorus of laughter rang through the room as made the very flowers dance in their pots, and the bouquets wag their heads in sympathy. Speaking of leeks, by-the-way, I shall never forget the immense interest and enthusiasm manifested by the doctor in a fine patch of them which he was then cultivating with uncommon assiduity, and which he maintained totally eclipsed anything of the kind to be found in the county—not excepting the garden of the Marquis himself. He would walk round and round this plot in a state of affectionate excitement, expatiating on the fine "points" of some particular leek, and endeavouring to work me up to full perception of its beauties; but seeing that my demonstrations of admiration were anything but hearty, he soon gave me up in compassion, charitably concluding that I had no genius for leeks. He tended them with a paternal care, and I truly believe visited them every morning, and noted their increase before he had said his prayers. He is well known and much respected in the district

for the skill, and prompt, kindly manner in which he discharges the duties of his noble calling; but I question whether he ever tended a patient or watched an "interesting" case with more zeal than he bestowed on these leeks. In token of which, making his usual matutinal inspection of them on one occasion, he saw an ignorant chicken in the very centre of the leek "bed," causing the soil and small clods to spin about in all directions, when, swift as a rocket, he darted upon the benighted fowl, and, before it or any other body could say Jack Robinson, twisted its neck, and it was converted into capital cock-a-leekie soup the same day—a terrible example to its more fortunate fellow fowls, which, it is hoped, was not lost upon them. Thus it is that whatever a vigorous, wholesome nature takes up with, it "goes into" in earnest—the great secret of success in the cultivation of either leeks or medicine.

The show being over, and the prizes being distributed, the directors, like the managers of mightier schemes, adjourned to dine on "the auspicious occasion" in the principal room of the village hostelry; with this gratifying distinction, that our directors dined at their own charges. After doing "ample justice," as the newspapers say, "to the good things provided by mine host," the wine (or, to speak more accurately, the toddy) was introduced, when toast, sentiment, and song followed

in rapid succession. And I am lout enough to confess that the hearing of these artless and unpolished ditties made me quite as happy (not taking the toddy into account) as the more laboured and ornate efforts of Signor Tromboni or Madame Skirlini at any full-dress concert. But, then, *that's* "the thing," and perhaps I ought to apologise (which I hereby do) for making such a vulgar confession. The principal draper in the village (being the only one) filled the chair, as the saying is, which was not strictly true, seeing that the chair was a very large one, and the draper a thin wiry man; and, therefore, speaking with entire precision, it might be said that he half-filled the chair. After disposing of the usual loyal and patriotic toasts (for the villagers have an immense contempt for the French, and love their Queen and country loyally, of which country, indeed, they consider their village no inconsiderable part), the Chairman gave the toast of the evening, viz., "Continued success to the G—— Flower Show." He could have wished that such an important toast, &c.; but they must take the will for the deed. This was the tenth show they had had, and he was proud to say that it was by far the most successful, both in respect to the quality and quantity of the flowers exhibited and the number of competitors. He was sure that all the inhabitants of the village who took pleasure in their gardens were

gainers in every way; for it was healthful amusement, to put it on no higher ground, and decidedly hostile to pills, and other artificial tinkerings of the system (which was a hit at the doctor); and the man who took delight of an evening in his garden was not likely to be a frequenter of the public-house; it set an example of taste and order to the "bairns," which might influence them for good in after years; and, looking to the success of their past efforts, let them go on and prosper. The Chairman made a very sensible and appropriate speech, and sat down amid cheers and the jingling of glasses. [*N.B.*—It will be seen from these remarks that the Chairman is a person of superior taste and intelligence; and, were further proof of this necessary, I need only add that he gets the *Citizen* regularly.] Then the health of the strangers present was given; and, as I was the only stranger present, I had, of course, to reply. I said (what was the fact) that nothing had given me more pleasure for many years than the exhibition that day; that I had seen many shows in the great city whence I came, with perhaps grander flowers and grander company thereat, but none that had afforded me more unmixed delight than their own village flower-show; that I admired the spirit and taste displayed by the competitors in turning out such a creditable display from their small gardens in their intervals of toil; that

such efforts were productive of something even better and more beautiful than their immediate object; that whoever felt an interest and joy in Nature's beautiful works, such as they were well fitted to cherish and deepen, was not likely on that account to be the less pure and good; that such pursuits took the mind away from grosser thoughts, and occupied a spare hour profitably and pleasantly that might not be so well spent; that flowers have hidden meanings for the eyes that can see them, and preach quiet revival sermons to the ears that can hear them;—with many other remarks equally recondite, which were received with much applause, but which I need not inflict on the reader.

Innocent pleasures, it has been well remarked, are not only joys at the time, but pleasures in the recollection. The man shut up within city walls, and immersed in city pursuits, during the most part of the year, often recalls, at counting-house and desk, the jolly vacation rambles with some choice companions in days that are no more; and enjoys them, too, in memory, without the discomforts and annoyances that *will* sometimes occur in actual travelling, however pleasant—

> "Kind memory treasures up the scenes for weary heart and brain;
> And thus, amid the city's dust, we tread the hills again."

So have I been present many a time and oft, in memory,

at the village flower-show; its fragrance lingers about me still, and scents, methinks, the musty parchments and prosaic legal documents wherein my ordinary vocations lie. And shall I own it, old fogey though I am, that the magic-lantern of memory also sometimes sends across the screen the figure of one of those fresh and lissome village maidens who were dressed out, like the flowers, in their best, and makes me feel how lonely is the life of an ancient bachelor, either in village or in city. For truly (although I have been jilted in my time) I do own that I have seen in no garden or show any flower that gives such beauty and fascination to a house as an accomplished, intelligent, and loving woman, particularly when she takes the shape of wife—

> "A creature not too bright and good
> For human nature's daily food;
> For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
> Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles."

But I am drifting into a strain that only reminds me the more how much of life's best joys I have missed, and is little in keeping with the pleasing and refreshing memories of the village flower-show. The only unpleasant reminiscence, indeed, I can connect with it, arose from my dreaming, one night some time afterwards, that I had become transformed into a huge chicken;

that I was industriously scraping, in that capacity, among the doctor's leeks; that that enthusiastic horticulturist suddenly appeared on the scene; that, in my attempts to escape, I awoke, and, remembering the untimely fate of the other chicken, I was pleased to find that I had not been converted into soup.

MOST IMPORTANT NEW PROJECTS.

THE superabundance of capital in the country at present and the low rate of bank interest, have induced a host of professional philanthropists, who view this state of things with much concern, to devise means whereby this inconvenient plethora of wealth may be conveniently absorbed. With this object, numerous joint-stock projects have been launched on the public market, each possessing features peculiarly its own, and from many of which large returns may be expected—for a long time. The interest of the promoters of these institutions being a matter of the very highest principle, the shareholders have the satisfaction of knowing that their capital will be taken care of. While, however, such a multitude of companies (particularly limited) have been established recently, a number of public-spirited gentlemen, who take an interest in these matters, are satisfied that other fields equally profitable

still remain to be occupied by other enterprising associations, which will prove as remunerative as many of those already in existence. As their spokesman, they have asked me to lay before a discerning public the particulars of a few forthcoming new schemes, as to the necessity for which there can be no doubt, and which, it will be observed, possess very striking advantages and recommendations. When the proper amount of capital is subscribed (but not sooner), each company will be duly registered, "in terms of the Act."

First—THE SHETTLESTON BISCUIT COMPANY AND SCONE AND SNAP ASSOCIATION.—Looking to the rapid growth of the population, and to the fact that the great majority of people are born when they are young, and remain so for a considerable period thereafter, it is manifestly of much importance that the supply of biscuits, snaps, and scones should bear some proportion to the crying demands of the juvenile portion of the community. Now, there can be no doubt that the supply in many instances falls greatly short of the demand, especially among the children of the poorer classes; and the present company is determined, by the introduction of improved machinery, to make up the deficiency. In the immediate vicinity of the romantic village of Shettleston, so famed for its historical associations and otherwise, the promoters propose to establish

an association for the unlimited manufacture of these useful articles; and they have every reason for thinking, on the most reliable data, that the scheme will prove eminently beneficial and profitable. For, supposing the juvenile population of these islands to amount to 15,000,000, and supposing each to consume one biscuit, snap, *and* scone per diem (which is surely a moderate estimate; and multiplying this by 365, it will at once be seen that the consumption is overwhelming and the field great. Without using any flower of speech, the company will use nothing but the best materials in their various manufactures.

Second—THE UNIVERSAL DICKEY AND SHIRT COLLAR PROVIDENT INSTITUTION.—In consequence of the very long price to which cotton has now attained, it has been becoming painfully evident to mankind in general that shirts have been recently becoming shorter and shorter, insomuch that there is good reason for apprehending that they will soon disappear altogether. This is a question that comes home to the bosom of everybody; and the promoters believe that they have been the first to realise the magnitude, and to provide for the consequences of the impending change. They say that mankind may as well make a virtue of necessity, and make up their mind to dickeys. Anticipating the enormous demand, the company have patented a new sewing

machine, to be driven by wind, which is capable of turning out 10,000 of these highly-useful and ornamental articles of dress per hour, and at a price not worth mentioning. While the home consumption will therefore be unlimited, it may not be generally known that Central Africa offers a fine field for the export trade, whereof the promoters mean to avail themselves with vigour, whenever their machinery is in full operation. As a further means of enhancing their profits, the company intends to add a loan branch to the institution. For example, one dozen of dickeys and one dozen of collars will be lent out to any individual (if clean) at the rate of twopence per month, payable by easy instalments, with interest at 5 per cent. The advantages of this plan to young men in situations and others, are obvious.

Third—THE GENERAL WALKING-STICK AND UMBRELLA INSURANCE COMPANY.—Considering the great frequency, rapidity, and facility with which umbrellas and walking-sticks move off and disappear, to the great inconvenience and mortification of their owners, it does seem strange that no institution has hitherto been formed for the purpose of indemnifying the loss thereby sustained by a numerous body of respectable and unsuspecting individuals. Most people who have had the felicity to own a nice silk umbrella, must have remarked, with considerable astonishment, that by simply placing

it in a lobby stand for an hour or so, it became transformed into alpaca or the commonest cotton—a change which could hardly be ascribed to any scientific principle, or, indeed, any principle at all. Again, in a boisterous climate like ours, it is well known that umbrellas are very liable to be turned inside out in stormy weather, and particularly when turning a corner—a process which neither men nor umbrellas can undergo without serious damage. The risks in all such cases have been calculated, and the tables constructed by an eminent actuary; and insurers may now, by the payment of a small annual premium, protect themselves against unforeseen and sudden loss, and thus keep their minds perfectly at ease, knowing that a highly-respectable and wealthy association is responsible for the consequences. Walking-sticks may be considered a collateral branch of the same subject, and the promoters have, therefore, determined to include them in their plan of operations. In short, as they are firmly resolved to stick to business, they will stick at nothing that may add to the profits, consistently with an honest walk and conversation. Canes, however, with silver knobs, and other expensive sticks, used chiefly by infirm young gentlemen, must be insured under special contract.

Fourth—THE RURAL LOCOMOTIVE BANKING COM

PANY.—The great scarcity of the "circulating medium" in villages and remote country districts is undoubtedly felt to be a great inconvenience by many individuals living in these places, and any plan whereby the deficiency may be supplied will be hailed as a boon. Many enterprising people would be glad to "do" a bill were they furnished with the opportunity; but owing to the great distance at which they live from the ordinary banking establishments, and other circumstances, they find this to be difficult, if not impossible. It is, therefore, proposed to institute a locomotive van, filled with bank notes and coin, to perambulate the country, by which means a continual supply of capital will be placed within the reach of all, and the inhabitants be put on a par with the favoured residents in large towns. Thus, huge heaps of money, which has hitherto lain comparatively unproductive, will find its way into new channels; and, looking to the large field to be occupied, the promoters have every reason to believe that a very extensive business may be done. A teller and accountant will accompany the van, the approach of which to each village or hamlet will be announced by a horn, to be blown vigorously by the driver. A sheriff-officer, who will sit beside the driver, will also form part of the institution, so that "diligence," if necessary, may be done on the spot. Compared with all ordinary bank-

ing establishments, therefore, "The Rural Locomotive Banking Company" will be in the van.

Fifth—THE GREAT WEST OF SCOTLAND FRIENDLY WOODEN LEG ASSOCIATION.—It may be affirmed, without fear of contradiction, that the genius of the British nation is hostile to cork legs. Instinctively disliking all such genteel make-believes, it takes its stand on an honest, straightforward, wooden leg, such as British sailors have worn for a "thousand years" (which is precisely the period their "flag has braved the battle and the breeze.") A genuine wooden leg has a sturdy English look about it, to which cork legs and similar ghastly shams can make no pretence; and then it comes greatly cheaper, and is much easier wrought. The present company is resolved to produce these useful articles in a style and finish never hitherto attempted, and they confidently look for public support to support their superior legs. Persons taking a quantity at a time will be supplied on liberal terms. It may be mentioned that each leg will be mounted with a patent "virl," composed of a combination of gutta percha and a mineral substance, which will wear for ever—at least during a lifetime. This will render its motion comparatively noiseless, and get rid of the disagreeable and emphatic thumping which attends the progress of the contrivance at present in use, and which is quite unlike

the gentle tread of any leg at ease. The promoters had intended to include other branches in their operations, but in the meantime the movement will be confined to legs.

The foregoing are only a few specimens of many equally important schemes which the promoters have on hand. They do not see why these should not succeed, looking to the success that has attended others not one whit more promising or practicable. There can be no doubt that great numbers of the companies recently got up have been established to supply a felt want—namely, a want of money and employment on the part of the concoctors and officials, although modesty withholds this reason from the prospectuses. Solicitors, agents, and others who have nothing to do, just because of that suddenly discover that society is in the direst want of a "New (Blank) Company, on entirely new principles," and devote themselves, by endless puffing and blowing, to set it afloat for the good of mankind and—their own. The promoters of the schemes sketched above have no personal ends in view—the improvement of mankind being their only object; and if they succeed, others, *in retentis*, will be launched without delay.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF JOKING.

THE remark is not more familiar than true, that, were it at all difficult to find a marked characteristic to distinguish man from the rest of animated nature, the desideratum might be at once and most appropriately supplied by dubbing him "a laughing animal." So far as known, this distinctive feature in his constitution can be claimed by none of the lower animals. Whatever perceptions of the ludicrous they possess, and whatever enjoyment they derive from these, cannot be ascertained, for external indications are wanting to testify. It is possible some of them may be so constituted as to enjoy an internal chuckle at the foibles and failings of their fellows, and, perhaps, even at the wayward humours and "fantastic tricks" of their proud superior, man. But whatever their feelings—risible on this score, they would seem to enjoy them all to themselves.

The faculty for the perception and enjoyment of the ludicrous would not have been bestowed upon man

unless meant to be exercised; and, accordingly, causes personal and external to himself exist in abundance for its gratification. There are, no doubt, some men gloomy and austere, who regard with contempt everything like the ebullitions of wit and jokery, who think it derogatory to their dignity to confess that they spend a minute in idle waggery and merriment. But so opposed to nature and reason is such a disposition, that we cannot help suspecting its manifestations to savour very much of grave imposture. There may be more foolishness, certainly more hypocrisy, wrapped up in a never-bending, solemn exterior, that can be covered by features that are ever ready, even at the most abortive joke, to expand into unrestrained risibility. Few people have known a really bad man who could burst into a hearty fit of laughter. His thoughts are of such a hole-and-corner kind, he makes them so much his own secret, they eschew the broad light of day with such shrinking suspicion, that he seems afraid lest with his laugh there might escape too much of his mind. Therefore it is, that when we conjure up the beau-ideal of a joker—one who laughs heartily at the mirthful sallies of others and can perpetrate the like himself—we never associate the idea of a bad heart with the picture. To do so would be as preposterous as to search for the villainy of Iago in the character of Falstaff. Conceive of Iago

throwing his whole heart into a laugh! We never think of a Jefferies, a Robespierre, a Danton, a Borgia, or any of the monster ruffians of fiction or real life, convulsed under the influence of a genuine laugh. The malignant grin, the withering sneer,—not laughter, but the hiss of the serpent—are instantly associated in our minds with black actions and villainous hearts.

The individual, on the other hand, who laughs on mirth-provoking cause till the tears come—whose soul and body, for the time being, seem to be swallowed up in one huge guffaw, forcibly reminding the onlooker of a small earthquake, and exciting considerable fears where the subject is more than ordinarily rotund—is rarely found to be a really bad man. So much of the heart is apparent, that we argue well for his kindly and benevolent feelings in other relations. There is no hypocrisy in a good laugh, while a great deal may be hid under a never-relaxing sanctimonious face. In truth, the highest minds and the best hearts have often found amusement in frivolities, that the pompously grave man, high on the stilts of a starched austerity, looks down upon with ineffable contempt. Plato loved a good joke, and was not only witty himself, but, like Falstaff, "the cause of wit in others." It was his habit, sometimes, to make merry with his disciples. On one of these occasions, a solemn pedant was observed approaching,

when the philosopher exclaimed, with a perfect knowledge of his man, "Let us be wise now; I see a fool coming." The celebrated Spartan, Agesilaus, used to amuse himself and his children by riding on a stick. The divine Socrates, by way of relaxation, used to dance and sing. Lucian, the facetious Roman poet, and Scaliger, the grave critic, entered heartily into the same amusements; Swift, most inveterate of jokers, often enjoyed himself in chasing his friends, the two Sheridans, through all the rooms of the deanery. Shakespeare played on the bass viol; and he, who himself had such an inimitable command of the ludicrous, we may rely could heartily appreciate a good joke. He evidently spoke his own sentiments when he made Gratiano exclaim,

> "Why should a man whose blood is warm within,
> Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
> Sleep when he wakes? and creep into the jaundice
> By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio,
> I love thee, and it is my love that speaks—
> There are a sort of men whose visages
> Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
> And do a wilful stillness entertain,
> With purpose to be dressed in an opinion
> Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;
> As who should say, *I am Sir Oracle,*
> *And when I ope my lips let no dog bark;*
> O, my Antonio, I do know of these,
> That therefore are reputed wise
> For saying nothing!"

There are few men, indeed, of healthy mental constitution, but, in the language of *The Dramatist*, "dote upon a jest within the limits of becoming mirth."

The intimate union of the mind and body renders any exhilaration of the one beneficial to the other. Viewed in this light, the mission of the joker is by no means unimportant. A joke that elicits a peal of laughter puts us in a better humour with ourselves, and disposes the mind to a warmer sympathy with humanity. If possessed of the happy knack to suit himself to his hearers, a hearty humorist is an invaluable acquisition in a general company. We have seen the sudden entrance of such a one the signal for welcoming smiles of gaiety, where but a short time previously a drowsy stillness and oppressive languor were beginning to reign. What a contrast to the approach of the stiff, solemn man? As *he* draws near he acts like an east wind upon the mind — chilling, damping, blasting all buoyant mirthfulness. Commend us rather to the joker, of the jovial, laughter-loving face and merry, twinkling eye. To society such a one is worth his weight in gold. We believe he contributes more to the preservation of social order and happiness than miles of legislative enactments and shiploads of demure homilies. When the mind is depressed with cares and anxieties, it is then the rivets that fasten our moral and social obligations are most

apt to give way. A witty sally that dispels this depression may often restore the mind to its lost tone, and turn the thoughts into happier channels. The man who, in a twinkling, can transform the sombre hues of melancholy into the sunny tints of joy—who, by the magic of his voice, can dissipate the darkness and bid the light break forth—is no common man. Brief the gleam may be, but not valueless; rather, like the fitful bursts of sunny splendour through the cloudy masses of an autumn day, we appreciate it all the more because of the general gloom.

In joking, however, there are some who forget altogether the wise man's observation, that "there is a time for everything under the sun." They possess such an intense perception of the ludicrous that it often manifests itself at times and in circumstances anything but appropriate. The subject of a good joke is presented to such an individual's mind, and out it must come. He is like a veteran sportsman, who mechanically places his finger on the trigger of his gun whenever a tempting shot offers; pop goes the gun, the game is down. He must have his joke, even on the most solemn occasions—not from any paucity of feeling, but from a total want of command over the workings of the bump-risible. Like good-hearted, honest Mr. John Chick, in "Dombey and Son," who, totally oblivious of

his situation, hums all manner of merry staves and catches, even when going to a funeral. John, for such untimely developments of his musical genius, procureth unto himself sundry sharp reprimands and angry looks, only to forget them and perpetrate the like indecorums the next minute. A jocular propensity, unaccompanied with prudence and good-nature, is oftentimes a dangerous possession. There is no weapon at once so easy and so difficult of use as ridicule. The weakest may wield it; a wise man only can use it. By a single ridicule-suggesting joke we may create for ourselves animosities that long years will be insufficient to eradicate, till we have reason to exclaim with the poet—

> "Unhappy wit, like most mistaken things,
> Atones not for the envy which it brings;
> Whose fame with pains we guard and lose with ease,
> Sure some to vex, but never all to please.
> 'Tis what the vicious fear, the virtuous shun;
> By fools 'tis hated, and by knaves undone!"

Let us never, therefore, for the purpose of raising a smile, wound the feeling of a friend; let no personal bitterness be mixed up with our jocularity; let us ever remember that the sacrifice of truth is but poorly compensated by a laugh; let us beware of revengeful or thoughtless ridicule; let us aim in all our jocular sallies, not to annoy, but to render happier and better, those

around us. The kindly feelings that thus radiate from our own bosoms to those of others, will return like the dews exhaled from earth to heaven, in refreshing showers of love and benevolence upon our hearts; and we will then come near realising the true "Philosophy of Joking."

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF NOT KNOWING ANYTHING OF WHAT YOU ARE SPEAKING OR WRITING ABOUT.

THE Baconian apothegm, "Knowledge is power," while true in a large and philosophical sense, is liable to considerable limitations in the every-day business and intercourse of life, as most of us have occasion to learn. Without being quite prepared to maintain, as the converse of that famous maxim, that "Ignorance is power," many of us must have experienced, at one time or other, that it too has a considerably potential voice in the management of mundane affairs. It was the saying of a celebrated statesman that one would be astonished to learn with how little knowledge a country is sometimes governed; and, coming down to the lower level of every-day life, we are continually reminded, by illustrations thrusting themselves under our noses, how small a modicum of wisdom may suffice for the successful

discharge of our social business and duties. But to touch, *currente calamo*, on a few of the exceptions to the axiom of the great Chancellor, I propose in this essayette to show forth some of the advantages of ignorance—to its possessor (if a man can be said to "possess" that which is *nothing*)—and some of the occasions on which it proves itself a "power" not easy to withstand.

Behold how the man not troubled with much knowledge expatiates on any topic with a confidence and fluency which, judging by the sound, would lead one to suppose that he had plumbed its depths; only, you see, his line brings up nothing! While he thinketh he hath exhausted his subject, he has only exhausted you. You interject a mild negative, which is instantly swept out of sight by a wordy torrent, and he goeth on with greater noise and rapidity than before, like a stream whose course had been interrupted by a bit of projecting rock. I have been wisely dumb in the presence of superior wisdom, and have imbibed more instruction from "divine silence" in such company than from the babbling of self-sufficient fluency, in whose presence I have been also, but not *likewise*, dumb. Have you not often experienced what a power the man wields who, not only without compunction, but with the most complacent patronage, subjects you to a windy dissertation upon any

topic of which you know infinitely more than himself, although you are not an encyclopædia, nor yet a book in breeches? Where knowledge is full and well packed, it is brought forth but slowly; and while wisdom, which is the sap of knowledge, and is generally accompanied by a dignified modesty, is troubled with doubts that check too hasty utterance, ignorance is liable to no such lets and hindrances, but skims along the plain with a jaunty swiftness much beholden to the light weight he carries.

> "Without the means of knowing right from wrong,
> He always is decisive, clear, and strong;
> Where others toil with philosophic force,
> His nimble nonsense takes a shorter course,
> Flings at your head conviction in the lump,
> And gains remote conclusions at a jump!"

Consider the beautiful ease of this process! With what comfort it surmounteth difficulties! With what cheap labour it maketh the rough places smooth, and the crooked places straight! Like the lily, he toils not, neither doth he spin (anything but the most absurd and interminable yarns, in which you are the worsted); yet he hath a shrewd suspicion that Solomon in all his glory was but a fool in comparison. He has no doubts, neither doth he permit you to have any; and he inwardly thinketh that you must be profoundly grateful for the

happy opportunity of basking in his beams; which sentiment of thankfulness, it must be confessed, is rendered somewhat equivocal, when, at the end of some of his specially fine efforts, you perform a yawn, of about a yard long, in his face. This unmistakable evidence of exhaustion on your part, he charitably concludeth, is due to your own opaqueness, which it is not his fault if he has failed to penetrate. He layeth hold of you by a mental button, and literally takes away your breath. You would have the same chance of getting in a word if he were a mill-wheel, which he is, metaphorically, going round and round with "d——able iteration," only he grinds no grain, and keeps all the "chaff" to himself. The congregation in a densely-filled church chokes up the door at exit—just by reason of its fulness; but when almost empty, behold with how much facility they come forth! Do you take, oh reader?

Some obscure poet, who plainly knew not much of human nature, once wrote a line which, by some means or other, has become famous—"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." Yet consider what a beautiful and guileless confidence the sentiment implies. Instead of standing shivering, and shuddering, and doubting on the verge of the unknown, like the children of light, Ignorance leaps into the void, with all the serenity of Blondin on his rope, balances his pole, tumbles his

somersaults, trundles his barrow, takes his swing, performs a hundred other amazing feats from which diffident Knowledge would shrink, and retires amid the acclamations of—himself. What although he misses his footing occasionally, and is covered with confusion when he intended a triumph, he reboundeth from the earth with all the elasticity of caoutchouc, and is on his legs again in a twinkling, as brisk as before. I envy no man his great possessions, for I may derive as much pleasure from the verdant lawns, the waving woods, and breezy mouutain slopes as the proprietor himself; and, then, I am saved the cares of ownership (unless, indeed, the same proprietor, with a superfluous politeness for which I don't thank him, puts up a "board" for my perusal, kindly informing me that, if found trespassing on these grounds, I will be prosecuted according to law); I envy not, neither do I despise, the titles of rank, for the man who most deserves a title, and wears it most worthily, is he who feels what a mere outside accident it is—like an artificial flower in a lady's bonnet—being no part of *him;* I do not even envy the mighty Provost of a small country town, who, being the greatest man in his little world, may be supposed to be as near the acme of felicity as it is possible to attain beneath the moon (with regard to a cheese, for example, which is in itself a microcosm, I have no doubt the

biggest mite feels much elated by the thought that he is mitiest of the mity in his own sphere)—but I do envy the equanimity, matter of course assumption of superiority, and cool ease often attained without an effort, by Ignorance, and which frequently in the battle of life leaves modest Knowledge far in the background. Let hack lecturers stump as they will about the "march of intellect" and the "schoolmaster being abroad," this is an undeniable advantage not to be acquired in any school or university, or through the medium of any Revised Code. I incline to the belief, indeed (although phrenologists have not yet marked it in their charts), that there is a bump of impudence, so great, in some instances, that it absorbs all the rest, and that it is often hereditary. Then think, too, what a blessed frame of mind this is—not to be arrived at by any amount of philosophy—and what elements of happiness it compriseth; such a man is never aware when he makes a fool of himself. In this case the man of knowledge, whose intellectual and emotional nature is cultivated to the utmost, is not a clear gainer in comparison, for the multiplication of mental acquisitions (with all their priceless pleasures) is too often a multiplication of mental disquietude and sensitiveness; and a false step, which covers the one with burning blushes, leaves the other in the calm possession of his native

serenity. Not being conscious of any deficiency, *he* is never "put out." He accepts a correction as if he were conferring a favour, and as if he knew all you were going to say before you had opened your mouth, rather impressing the company, indeed, with the notion that your well-meant interruption is something of an impertinence. Not being aware that ideas are of any importance, he is never at a loss for words; or if, by any chance, he does get hold of a small idea, he hammers away at it like a gold-beater at an infinitesimal ingot—making the almost imperceptible atom cover an immense extent of *surface;* and by such cheap means he not unfrequently comes into considerable repute. He excelleth in making a long speech and saying nothing—a result of which he is cheerfully unconscious. For, a man who has the enviable talent of delivering himself of nothing with *empressement* shall shine in the eyes of multitudes, when he who has a thought or two worth listening to, but who gets it out without any flourish, perhaps with awkwardness, shall remain in darkness. There is nothing like making a great noise about nothing for bringing yourself into notice, and also for making a fortune sometimes. The trumpet, indeed, is one of the most ancient of musical instruments, as appears from that well-known proverb of the illustrious Chinese sage, Kien-Fung—whose name must be familiar

to scholars, and which is to found in that famous collection of his, supposed to have been written three million years ago—"Blessed is he who bloweth his own trumpet; for whosoever bloweth not his own trumpet, the same shall not be blowed." This is an advantage not to be gainsaid, against which modest Knowledge, which is often short of wind, cannot contend. And as the blowing of a trumpet on one memorable occasion tumbled down a strong wall, and led to the conquest of a city, we have seen the blowing of various trumpets in our own day, if touted on sufficiently long and loud, followed by the most surprising results. If your trumpet should happen to be only a penny whistle, never mind —blow!

If this present writer has picked up, in his maturer years, a few grains of wisdom by the wayside, he does not forget that now remote period in his history, videlicet, "in life's morning march when his bosom was young," when he used to write essays and take part in debates on the most comprehensive subjects, with the smallest possible stock of knowledge; and he has a notion that, just on that account, he could write and speak then with a freedom and facility which he envies now. I remember lucubrating one essay, in particular, on the different governments of the world, and their comparative social influences, in their physical, moral,

intellectual, and religious aspects, which occupied just one half-hour in the delivery; was considered by myself at the time as alike admirable and exhaustive; and for which I received no end of encomiums, and a unanimous vote of thanks. Could I write such an essay now? I rather think not. If a little more knowledge has come to me since (let me hope it has brought a little wisdom and charity along with it; for if knowledge does not do this, it is hardly worth having), doubts and anxieties to which I was then a stranger would start on every side, to paralyze my more diffident, because more erudite, pen. I remember, however, well, one of the indirect advantages of that expansive and ambitious performance, quite distinct from the "mental improvement" part of the thing. Ladies were admitted to our society meetings, and Barbara———, with the gentle face, blue eyes, and golden tresses, was there :—

> "Then her cheek was pale, and thinner than
> Should be for one so young;
> And her eyes on all my motions with
> A mute observance hung."

That essay did it! And now, after the lapse of many changing years, and while I indite these words, the same Barbara, with another name, sits in the easy-chair there on the other side of the fire, stitching little frocks, and listening to the little prattle of another little Barbara

gambolling on the hearth-rug, who is destined, no doubt, to repeat the same process in the experience of some future essayist, whose address is at present unknown. And so the world goes round. But all this being "private and confidential," the well-bred reader may, if it so please him, pass it over.

I remember, too, in these days (they were none the less happy because very ignorant days), competing for a prize given for the best essay on "The Brain and the Nervous System." I knew as much about the subject as a gorilla may be supposed to know about the geological formation of the globe, or about his biographer, M. du Chaillu; which did not prevent me, however, from describing an unknown region I had never visited. I crammed; wrote; conquered; and my essay took the first prize—a result which astonished myself considerably more than it did my competitors. The race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong, and certainly never at all to the timid or the slow;—and I think I have seen the same experiment repeated on larger and smaller scales since, with results not to be despised. A Frenchman will fight for a couple of days with only three raisins in his pocket; and, with an equally humble stock of reasons in his head, Incompetence is throughly equipped for any undertaking, and issues forth, "conquering and to con-

quer." There, for example, was my famous article on "The Genius of the Author of 'Edwin of Deira,'" which I forwarded to the editor of the *Cheapside Omnibus*, but which that benighted conductor refused to admit, returning the MS. "with thanks;" while he gave the best place in his lumbering vehicle to an essay by that jolterhead, Junkison, on the stirring question—"Whether the ancient Greeks used cream to their tea, with a preliminary inquiry whether they knew anything at all of Pekoe?" chiefly, I believe, because Junkison, although he hadn't much brains, possessed, in an eminent degree, the gift of importunity, had plenty of money, gave good dinners, and kept choice wines; while I, in a social point of view, was "nowhere;" couldn't sound my private trumpet; and dined often, with a gusto a gourmand might have envied, off a potato and a "Glasgow magistrate," washed down with a mug of very small beer; as small, indeed, as Junks' essay.

> "Others to some faint meaning make pretence,
> But Junky seldom deviates into sense."

In like manner, what immense waggon-loads of books are written now-a-days, just because authors have nothing to say; and are extensively read, just because readers have nothing to do! Not to know anything of what you are writing about is a stock-in-trade. You can

"set up" on it, and make as fine a show, let me tell you, as the drawers in a druggist's shop, all nicely labelled, do with nothing in them. All of us know instances of books which, for this very reason, have attained their fifteen or twenty editions; while others, full of truth, of wisdom, of thought, fall still-born from the press, and 'cumber the shelves of disconsolate publishers;—and so, a "Paradise Lost," or a "Vicar of Wakefield," shall with difficulty be sold for a few pounds; while a "sensational drama," which splits the ears "of the groundlings but makes the judicious grieve," shall enable its author to start his carriage and keep flunkeys, literary as well as the other kind. Shall we, then, say "where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise?" *Chacun à son gout.* But for my own part, I do not well see how, with all their disadvantages, the world would get on without some knowledge and wisdom in it; farther, I am fully persuaded that nothing can come from nothing—that, however great a noise they make, inanities of speech and writing are doomed inevitably and quickly to pass into chaos and old night, whence they sprung; while the true, brave, quiet, earnest word of wisdom and genius shall be heard across the centuries, and influence men's thoughts and destinies for ever. Come, now, old fogey, no moralizing! Well, each reader may pick what meaning he likes out of my humble essay; for not car-

ing much for the didactic, I hold with Prince Alfred (Tennyson, I mean) :—

> "That liberal applications lie
> In art, like Nature, dearest friend;
> So 'twere to cramp its use, if I
> Should hook it to some useful end."

HOOD'S POEMS.

NOTHING is more common now-a-days, than to hear of the degeneracy of poetry, and the little appreciation bestowed by the public on the lucubrations of our modern bards. And the cry is, generally speaking, well founded. That much of the poetry which is daily poured from the press creates little sympathy, is nothing very extraordinary; the apathy is traceable to a very simple cause—the over-supply of an inferior article. The human heart is the same now as it was eighteen hundred years ago. Its feelings, affections, and sympathies are awakened still by the same agencies as then. Half-a-century ago, the genius of Burns sent an electric thrill through the Scottish bosom; it has since been felt in every corner of the world, wherever a Scottish heart beats; nor do we see any evidence that its intensity is weakening. On the contrary, each successive year seems to add new power to the spell,

and to stamp more indelibly the name of Robert Burns upon the human heart. And were another to rise up in our own day, gifted, like him, with the same rare and varied powers, he would receive the right hand of hearty welcome. In these days the poetry of mediocrity will not do; and we think we are justified in saying, that nine-tenths of what we are favoured with is of that character. In this as in other matters of taste, excellence must be gained, to secure and maintain general admiration. It is because this essential quality is absent, that little of the poetry of the day survives its birth. Poets and poems we possess in inexhaustible abundance and variety—poets in everything but head and heart—poems wanting in nothing but originality, common sense, and simple feeling. The general mind, sick to satiety with smooth rhymes and mawkish sentimentality, neglects their effusions. Nevertheless, the outpourings of *true* genius are as much welcomed and appreciated as ever: and while human nature remains human nature, the chords of the heart will never cease to vibrate to the touch of a master-hand, be the theme what it may.

We look upon the poems of Thomas Hood, as forming one of the refreshing spots in the great desert of modern poetry; and the public has shown that when real, life-like poetry is presented, the taste for its enjoy-

ment is as keen and deep as ever. These poems are the product of a great mind and a warm heart. It is but recently Britain—may we not add, the world?—was deprived of Thomas Hood, and all of us can yet recall the affecting description of his last moments. A beloved wife and affectionate children dependent upon him for support, he toiled for that sacred object, even while the blight of mortal sickness was upon his frame. While the lamp of life was flickering in its socket, this highly gifted man was compelled to task his overwrought mind to the utmost for bare subsistence. "Work, work, work!" cried necessity, till the debilitated and shattered body became incapable to contain the large soul that struggled within.

Hood's character and mission were not understood in his lifetime. He was looked upon as an inimitable humorist and wit—an inveterate punster—a mighty word-conjuror—a living impersonation of an enlarged Joe Miller—quick and happy at seizing a witty point, and arraying it in the quaintest and most striking language. All this he doubtless was; but he was something greater. He was a poet whose soul was cast in nature's mould; and his published poems are his title to this high name. Like Burns, his works prove him to have been born a poet. Poetry was the celestial element of his being, and should have been the soul of

his whole endeavours. What Thomas Carlyle so beautifully expresses of the great peasant-bard, is in a great measure applicable to Hood. "Lifted into that serene ether, whither he had wings given him to mount, he would have needed no other elevation. A virtue, as of green fields, dwells in his poetry; it is redolent of natural life, and of natural men. He has a consonance in his bosom for every note of human feeling—the high and the low—the sad and the ludicrous—the mournful and the joyful, are welcome in their turns to his all-conceiving spirit." We see in him the gentle and trembling spirit of the woman; with the deep earnestness, the force and passionate ardour of the man; and thence arises the power that melts or inflames the heart at will.

The sketchy productions issued during his lifetime, though often touching upon a vein of deep feeling, did not prepare the public mind for the high intellectual, and, we may add, moral gratification which his two posthumous volumes, lately published, afford. Much of his time was absorbed in magazine literature, and this is not precisely the best field for exhibiting the true powers of a writer to advantage. He is often compelled to furnish his contributions within a limited period; and this limitation is necessarily adverse to a full, free, and fair handling of his subject. But

even with this unceasing drain upon his mind, Hood was slowly and silently rearing the monument of his future fame. These volumes cannot fail to secure him a high place among the poets of England; and their perusal only leads us to regret, that the mind which effected so much, was not permitted to accomplish more.

Hood's sympathies, we are all aware, were eminently alive to the interests of the lower classes, and some of his most stirring pieces are consecrated to the cause of oppressed humanity. All of his poems, not merely imaginative, have a moral aim; and this lends to them a dignity and a holiness, which must ever render the poet and the man dear to every well-wisher of our species.

The sensation produced by the "Song of the Shirt" is not yet forgotten; and it must have been a rich reward to his benevolent heart, to know that it was the means of effecting a melioration in the condition of the oppressed women on whose behalf it was written.

The "Dream of Eugene Aram" is another piece bearing the mark of the writer's peculiar genius. The poem is founded upon an actual occurrence. A tutor, highly educated, accomplished, and intellectual, murders an old man to obtain possession of his money. The poet narrates the story in the form of a dream;

and the thoughts and passions of the unhappy murderer, previous and subsequent to the horrid deed, and also during its commission, are portrayed in colours of terrible vividness. What an awful appearance of truth does the following verse, for example, wear. The deed is done, and the murderer, transfixed with horror, contemplates his bloody work, lying at his feet a mass of "lifeless flesh and bone."

> "Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone,
> That could not do me ill;
> And yet I feared him all the more,
> For lying there so still;
> There was a manhood in his look
> That murder could not kill."

The piece entitled "Ode to Rae Wilson, Esq.," is, of its kind, excelled, perhaps, by none in the collection. This gentleman had taken the trouble to characterise some of the poet's productions as "profaneness and ribaldry"; and though the latter bastinadoes his censor very specially, the poem is made the vehicle of the author's sentiments against intolerance, cant, bigotry, hypocrisy, and, in short, against everything that would appropriate the name of religion without imbibing its spirit. Occasionally, it must be confessed, in the course of the poem, things sacred and common are jumbled together, in a manner somewhat reckless and

reprehensible, and most offensive to a really religious mind. We do not like to hear God and religion spoken of in tones of every-day familiarity. Sacred matters, as becomes them, should be touched on reverently. Hood was, nevertheless, a good as well as a great man; and his free, blunt, direct verses sprung from no want of due reverence for things holy. But how many are there who seize with avidity on whatever has the remotest appearance of justifying their bold—not to say loose sentiments; who delight to pick up any sarcasm or ridicule to throw it in the teeth of those they are pleased to dub "fanatics" and "bigots;" the liberalised censors being, in truth, all the while as great bigots as the individuals they condemn. The sentiments of the "Ode," however, are generally so just and striking, and clothed in such forcible and graphic language, as almost to expiate the drawbacks we have indicated.

We cannot forbear transcribing the poet's description of himself. It may be termed his moral portrait. Contrasting himself with the hypocrite, he says:—

"Of such a character, no single trace
Exists, I know, in my fictitious face;
There wants a certain cast about the eye,
A certain curling of the nose's tip,
In scorn of all that is beneath the sky—
In brief, it is an aspect deleterious,
A face decidedly not serious;

A face profane, that would not do at all
To make a face at Exeter Hall!

Well! be the graceless lineaments confest,
I do enjoy this bounteous, beauteous earth,
And dote upon a jest
'Within the limits of becoming mirth.'
No solemn sanctimonious face I pull,
Nor think I'm pious when I'm only bilious;
Nor study, in my sanctum supercilious,
To frame a Sabbath bill or forge a bull;—
I pray for grace—repent each sinful act—
And love my neighbour far too well, in fact,
To call and twit him with a godly tract,
That's turned, by application, to a libel.
My heart ferments not with the bigot's leaven;
All creeds I view with toleration thorough,
And have a horror of regarding heaven
As anybody's rotten borough."

In reference to religion, he has the following:—

"With sweet, kind natures, as in honeyed cells,
Religion lives and feels herself at home;
But only on a formal visit dwells,
Where wasps, instead of bees, have formed the comb."

With every respect for the outward forms of religion, when combined with its spirit, he contrasts the self-righteous Pharisee, whose only piety is a rigid observance of ordinances, times, and places, with the humble, but large soul, that sees and communes with God in all his works; that can raise for itself a temple in the desert,

and can send forth as pure and holy a hymn of praise, from the solitude of the mountain-side, as from the stately cathedral, with the swelling notes of the deep-toned organ rolling on the ear.

> "Thrice blessed rather is the man with whom
> The gracious prodigality of nature,
> The balm, the bliss, the beauty, and the bloom,
> The bounteous providence in every feature,
> Recall the good Creator to his creature,—
> Making all earth a fane, and heaven its dome.
> To his tuned spirit the wild heather-bells
> Ring Sabbath knells."

Passing from these graver themes, we alight on some of the poet's humorous effusions—humorous in ideas and language, but fraught with deep moral lessons. Though calculated to awaken mirth from their mere drollery, one important aim seems to be kept in view in all; the wit is made subservient to morality—is designed to make us both wiser and better. Though free and playful as the mountain breeze, it is equally healthy; no contaminating elements are mixed up with it; it communicates to the intellect and the morals an exhilarating and elevating influence. Looking to the many temptations that the possession of such an exquisite wit must have subjected him to, does it not redound to the spirit of the gifted dead, that we never find it made the pander of vice, the handmaid of scurrility, or the

feather that winged the dart of undeserved, revengeful ridicule?

The longest humorous piece in the collection is one entitled "Miss Kilmansegg and her Precious Leg." The command of language, felicity of illustration, and the appropriateness and pungency of the wit displayed in this production, are really wonderful. It seems as if knocked off at a single sitting, so warm, fresh, vigorous, and life-like is every line. Like the gushing of the mountain stream, on it dashes—leaping, rushing, sparkling in the sun's rays, impelled on its now calm, now boisterous course, by the inexhaustible reservoir whence it springs.

The subject of the poem may be considered a felicitous comment and satire on the absurd world-worship of wealth, and the unhappy consequences that thence result in many individual instances. The heroine is a wealthy heiress, the daughter of a man who

> "Had rolled in money, like pigs in mud,
> Till it seemed to have entered into his blood
> By some occult projection;
> And his cheeks, instead of a healthy hue,
> As yellow as any guinea grew,
> Making the common phrase seem true
> About a *rich* complexion."

The poet traces the hopeful heiress through the various stages of birth, christening, education, courtship,

marriage, misery, and death. By an accident, described in graphic terms, she loses one of her legs, and determines to rest satisfied with nothing short of a solid gold substitute. On this the story hangs, and the poet makes it the medium of his sentiments on mammon-worship. When the amiable young lady is fitted with this valuable appendage, it becomes, of course, the cynosure of wondering eyes.

Like many other large owners of the yellow metal, she is soon beset by a host of suitors, the courtship of the tender inamoratos being more directed to the leg than to the lady. Wood and cork are suggested as likely materials to supply the place of the unfortunate limb. But no—

"She couldn't, she shouldn't, she wouldn't have wood,
Nor a leg of cork if she never stood;
And she swore an oath, or something as good,
That the proxy limb should be golden.

A wooden leg! what a sort of a peg
For your common Jockies and Jennies;
No, no! her mother might worry and plague,
Weep, go down on her knees, and beg,
But nothing would move Miss Kilmansegg,
She could, she would, have a golden leg,
If it cost ten thousand guineas.

Wood, indeed, in forest or park,
With its sylvan honours and feudal bark,
Is an aristocratical article;

But split, and sawn, and hacked about town,
Serving all needs of pauper and clown,
Trod on, staggered on, wood cut down,
  Is vulgar fibre and particle !

And cork—when the noble cork tree shades
A lovely group of Castilian maids,
  'Tis a thing for a song or a sonnet ;
But cork as it stops the bottle of gin,
And bungs the beer, the *small* beer in ;
It pierced her heart like a corking pin
  To think of standing upon it."

In the progress of the poem, the bard, among some cutting strictures on incidental subjects, has a fling at a not uncommon kind of vanity—"leg-worship"—much in fashion among dandies and other exquisites. He says—

"Supposing the trunk and limbs of man,
Shared on the allegorical plan,
  By the passions that mark humanity,
Whichever might claim the head or heart,
The stomach, or any other part,
  The legs would be seized by vanity.

There's Bardus—a six-foot column fop,
A light-house without any light atop,
  Whose height would attract beholders,
If he had not lost some inches clear
By looking down at his kerseymere,
Ogling the limbs he holds so dear,
  Till he got a stoop in his shoulders.

Talk of art, or science, or books,
And down go the everlasting looks,
  To his pedestal beauty so wedded;
Try him wherever you will, you find
His mind in his legs, and his legs in his mind;
All prongs and folly—in short, a kind
Of fork that is fiddle-headed."

Conducting Miss Kilmansegg to her couch, after the racketting and rioting of a great feast and ball, at which she had "come out," and where, of course, the leg had excited unbounded admiration and cupidity, the poet thus takes occasion to apostrophize the bed:—

"To the happy, a first-class carriage of ease,
To the land of nod, or where you please;
  But, alas for the watchers and weepers!
Who turn, and turn, and turn again,
But turn, and turn, and turn in vain,
      With an anxious brain,
      And thoughts in a train
  That does not lie upon sleepers.

And, oh! when the blessed diurnal light
Is quenched in the providential night,
  To render our slumber more certain;
Pity, pity, the wretches that weep,
For they must be wretched who cannot sleep
  When God himself draws the curtain."

Among the many suitors for the hand, or rather for the leg, of the wealthy heiress, the fortunate besieger

is a foreign Count—a Count, of course, merely by his own account.

> "A foreign Count, who came *incog.*,
> Not under a cloud, but under a fog,
> In a Calais packet's fore-cabin;
> With eyes as black as the fruit of the thorn,
> And his hooky nose, and his beard half-shorn,
> Like a half-converted Rabbin.
>
> And because the sex confess a charm
> In a man who has slashed a head or an arm,
> Or has been a throat's undoing;
> He was dressed like one of the glorious trade,
> At least when glory is off parade,
> With a stock and a frock well trimmed with braid,
> And frogs that went a-wooing."

And then—and the following notable accomplishments have turned the heads and won the hearts of many a giddy girl—

> "And then—and much it helped his chance—
> He could sing, and play first-fiddle, and dance;
> Perform charades and proverbs of France;
> Act the tender, and do the cruel;
> For among his other killing parts,
> He had broken a brace of female hearts,
> And murdered three men in a duel."

Ere the honeymoon is at the full, the golden-legged lady finds to her sad experience that the fellow is a cold, heartless schemer, with as little title to the name of

gentleman as to that of Count. Love for her he had never felt, and the real object of his villainy once secured, the married life of Miss Kilmansegg is one of unmitigated misery. Such a result, in a greater or less degree, cannot fail to flow from all matches where mere gold or externals alone, without reference to mental or moral qualities, form the motive influence of the unions. The following moral closes the poem :—

"Gold, gold, gold, gold !
Bright and yellow, hard and cold ;
Molten, graven, hammered, and rolled ;
Heavy to get and light to hold ;
Hoarded, bartered, bought, and sold ;
Stolen, borrowed, squandered, doled ;
Spurned by the young, and hugged by the old,
To the very verge of the churchyard mould ;
Price of many a crime untold ;
Good, or bad, a thousand-fold,
How widely its agencies vary ;
To save, to ruin, to curse, to bless,
As even its minted coins express,
Now stamped with the image of good Queen Bess,
And now of a bloody Mary."

THE TESTIMONIAL.

LAST night, the friends and admirers of Samuel Gigot, Esquire, met to present that gentleman with a fitting token of their esteem. In remote and comparatively uncivilised times, virtue used to be thought its own exceeding great reward; but with the march of intellect and other improvements in modern social life, it has been found that the belief in virtue or merit of any kind hardly exists until it is first entertained at a supper (amid great applause) and presented with a testimonial labelled, in fact, like a liqueur bottle, to show forth to all mankind that this is the genuine article, and no mere coloured water, such as shines in a druggist's window. Hence it was felt, when so many men of inferior note were getting their eminent merits acknowledged, in the shape of a snuff-box, gold watch, German silver pencil-case, or a walking-stick, that a man who has done so much for our municipal institutions, and

the welfare of the city generally, as Mr. G., ought not to go without some tangible and worthy mark of the esteem of his fellow-citizens. Being a man of simple tastes (Mr. Gigot is a bachelor) and retiring disposition, the committee appointed by the subscribers to make the necessary arrangements felt considerable difficulty in selecting such a testimonial as, while it would do credit to themselves, should prove thoroughly acceptable to their honoured guest, on the ground both of ornament and utility.

At length, by a happy inspiration, they hit upon an object combining both recommendations, and also some novelty, compared with the ordinary routine of presentations. Mr. Gigot's consent having, with some difficulty, been obtained, a numerous company accordingly met within the "Shoemakers' Arms," 893 Saltmarket, for the purpose of formally handing over the testimonial to the guest of the evening—Mr. Whang in the chair. After an ample supper (which did much credit to Mrs. Bauchles, the landlady), and the usual loyal and patriotic toasts had been disposed of, the Chairman said they had now, after a satisfactory supper, come to the most important business of the evening. He need not dilate on the many admirable qualities of their friend as a man and a citizen (he was sorry he could not add husband and father); these were patent

to the whole city. Mr. Gigot was not a man of yesterday, as any one might see by looking at his whiskers, and he had spent himself long and faithfully in the public service. The dexterous, valiant, and successful manner in which, trusting to his own legs alone, he had walked into the abuses of our municipal institutions, deserves some grateful acknowledgment at our hands; and although many of the improvements which, with far-seeing philanthropy, he had pressed upon an apathetic public had not yet taken shape in act, there could be no doubt that, in the "good time coming," when wiser men arose, the generation of Glasgow now in petticoats would bless the name of Samuel Gigot, and stand aghast at the selfish obtuseness of their fathers. The Chairman concluded by presenting Mr. Gigot with a handsome pair of Wellington boots, which, he hoped, might prove a good fit, and in which he trusted to see their worthy friend marching forward in the path of duty for many a long day to come. A neatly-inscribed plate was placed on the top of the right boot, commemorating the presentation, and bearing the classical motto, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam.*

The Chairman then, amid the unanimous applause of the company, requested Mr. Gigot to try on the boots, which he did accordingly, with powerful assistance. In reply, he said it had always been the dearest ambition

of his soul to stand well with his fellow-citizens, and he could now feel the grounds of their confidence; he would continue their faithful servant to the last, and he hoped the elegant testimonial in which he now stood would enable him to take many other steps in the right direction. He would say no more at present, as the boots were somewhat tight; he would simply conclude by quoting the well-known couplet of the immortal Martin Farquhar Tupper—

> "Worth makes the man, the want of it the fellow;
> The rest is all mere leather and prunella."

The boots, with the assistance before mentioned, were then pulled off and placed on the table, round which they circulated, for the inspection of the company.

The Chairman announced, amid deafening acclamations, that sufficient surplus funds remained to sole the boots for three years to come, or even to re-leg them, should that be found necessary in the ordinary course of nature. Thereafter the evening was harmoniously spent in song, sentiment, and toddy, and the company dispersed at a seasonable hour, all highly gratified, and some highly elevated, by the entertainment.

A LAY LECTURE ON REVIVALISM.

It is very difficult for any individual, let his religious sentiments be ever so genuine and profound, while, at the same time, quiet and unostentatious, to express his doubts as to the prudence or benefits of a religious movement, carried on by a particular class, in a particular way, without being charged by many of them with indifference to religion itself, or even positive scepticism and hostility—it is so easy for those who promote and are identified with such movements, to assume that the noise they make is synonymous with genuine piety, and so convenient to take for granted that all who do not follow in their wake and sympathise with their efforts must be wrong. I have felt this peculiarly to be the case in conversing with many good people about the Revival movement. In expressing my independent, and, I hope, honest convictions on the subject, fairly and calmly, I have found myself falling fifty per cent. in

their estimation, because I could not endorse their views and acts, when I should rather have obtained increased respect by reason of my honesty; for I hope honesty and candour are also worthy of some honour, and no one will deny there is need for the revival of these useful qualities too in many quarters. As little would I deny that there is great need for a practical revival of religion—that religion which tells upon the character and conduct of individuals, and becomes woven into the web of their every-day life—making better husbands and wives, more obedient children, juster and kinder masters, faithfuller servants, more honest merchants, widening the love and deepening the faith between man and man, flowing out in deeds of beneficence, and, in fine, transforming the poor sham we often dignify by the name of *life* into a brave, pure, high, and active reality, that preaches with more eloquence than a thousand sermons. But ah! it is so much easier to indulge the feelings than to preach such a sermon as *that*.

I have, at the earnest instigation of some friends, attended two or three Revival meetings, and I can truly say that for me they were far from edifying. The keynote of all the discourses I heard was "hell," and the speaker seemed to derive much energy and satisfaction from the certainty he often expressed (and of which he seemed to possess the exclusive knowledge) that we

were all hastening rapidly to perdition. The birch signally failed as an instrument of education, and it has been superseded in our modern systems by kindness and love, which have done wonders for the young. The style of preaching to which I have referred bears the same relation to religious instruction that the birch did to secular education; and my impression is that it will fail for the same reason. No man is to be made wiser or better by terrorism; and I have often thought, while listening to such discourses, how much better it would be if the preachers would bear in mind the sublime yet simple models which the Master and His disciples bequeathed to the world eighteen hundred years ago.

Far be it from me to doubt that many of the leaders in this movement are honest and good men; but I believe they have mistaken their vocation. It is nothing less than painful to an intelligently devout mind to listen to the profane manner in which they jumble together things sacred and common, and the familiar way in which they use the Great Name that ought to be introduced but sparingly, and only with the deepest reverence. While such exhibitions may "split the ears of the groundlings, they make the judicious grieve," and react perniciously upon religion itself. Of all subjects in the world, surely religion requires wisdom in the treatment. The man who puts himself forward

as a spiritual guide and comforter to a brother or a sister, must come to the high task with something more than a power of vehement declamation, and some sudden "experiences" that have (according to his own assumption), raised him all at once from the mire of sensuality to the pedestal of saintship. Man is a many-sided being, and knowledge of his nature, spiritual, moral, and intellectual, is needed in any one who would speak to, and for, his soul, with living power and efficacy. It is no justification to say that many of these self-constituted teachers, though wanting in knowledge and education, are well meaning; for we should hardly entrust a shoemaker with the performance of a delicate surgical operation on the ground that he meant well. And yet many of our best clergymen—the best in intellect, education, knowledge, and Christian experience—find it more difficult to write and preach a sermon to a congregation whose varied wants, from these qualifications, they all the better know and can sympathise with, than the ignorant lay revivalist, who can harrow up by the hour the feelings of persons of both sexes, when he describes with panoramic vividness the place of woe, as if he had left it but yesterday; for this is a style of eloquence level to the meanest capacity, in which the speaker seems to gather strength from the terror he creates.

But are the efforts and the noise made by those itinerating revivalists, and the encouragement they meet with, not inferential proofs, tacitly admitted by our clergymen, that *they* are supine or negligent in the discharge of their duty? It is the same gospel that is preached by both, I hope; and if there is good work to be done, I, for one, would rather have it in the hands of our own educated, intelligent, and, as a whole, able clergymen, than see their sacred functions usurped by men who might be better employed in sitting at their feet. Do not let me be misunderstood. As a layman, I think we expect too much from our ministers. They are but men, with the same weaknesses and infirmities as ourselves, and entitled to the same allowances. But though laymen, if Christians, *we* should also be ministers, for there are many ways of ministering or *serving*, besides preaching, and Christianity consists not so much in speaking and *hearing*, as in being, doing, and suffering, like its great Founder. And I freely admit that blaming our ministers for their shortcomings, is often but a handy way of excusing our own, for it is human nature to shoulder our own religious deficiencies and infirmities over on our teachers; and the coldness so often complained of in pulpit services is, in truth, only another name for lack of warmth in ourselves. And I have observed that it is precisely the people who indulge

most in these complaints about the inefficiency of our clergymen, who do little or nothing in the way of help and encouragement. Therefore it is, I say, that, without underrating the value of mere preaching, we might count a grand and true revival of religion to have begun, when each individual member of a congregation considered and felt himself to be, what he should be, a co-labourer with his minister, and equally a servant of the Master. Were this the case, all would indeed be revivalists, and in such a way that the jeers of the sceptic and the scorner would fall pointless and harmless on eloquent lives panoplied in deeds of active virtue. But, as an acute observer has remarked, "It is easier to get credit for spirituality by thrilling at some impassioned speech on the platform or sermon from the pulpit than by living a life of justice, mercy, and truth; and hence religious life degenerates into mere indulgence of feeling, the excitement of religious meetings, or the *utterance* of strong feeling. In this sickly strife life wastes away, and the man or woman becomes weak instead of strong, for invariably utterance weakens feeling."

I abstain from noticing the physical manifestations said to have occurred at many Revival meetings, as I have never seen them; although, from all accounts, it would seem that such cases required an altogether different kind of physician from the speakers who pro-

duce them. One word as to the suddenness of the alleged conversions. If genuine conversions have taken place, I devoutly hope and pray they may prove permanent. At the same time, I believe that an analogy runs throughout all nature, moral, physical, and intellectual, and that, as a rule, we can no more expect an abandoned profligate to be transformed all at once into a man full of all the Christian graces, than we can expect the ripe scholar, the profound mathematician, the accomplished historian, without many years of patient toil or study; or to see the acorn that we dropped into the soil but yesterday, rearing on high to-day the oak's gigantic gnarled trunk, and spreading far and wide its mighty magnificence of branches and green leaves. Before the oak reached that stature and grandeur, it has borne the heat of centuries of summer suns; it has been white with many winter snows; it has done battle with many fearful storms, which have only rooted it the more firmly; the breeze of summer has sighed among its branches; little birds have made their nests and piped their songs amid its greenery; weary travellers have rested beneath its grateful shade, and gone on their way rejoicing. So, I believe, with the genuine Christian. His character is not formed in a day. Through many years of storm and calm, sunshine and gloom, doubt, danger, and suffering, he at length

reaches the haven of rest, the "long result" of his many struggles; and henceforth he "steers right on, bating no jot of heart and hope." It is such an ordeal as this, in truth, that gives him the best of all titles to be "guide, philosopher, and friend" to a wandering brother, and not the theoretical Christianity that may pass glibly enough from the tongue, although it has never touched the conscience and transformed the life within the life.

There is nothing in the nature of things why weavers, carters, pugilists, and chimneysweeps should not be good men (although a sweep might find a more appropriate vent for his abilities than preaching), but a little more humility might make them hesitate to assume the high office of teachers and the sacred name of "Evangelist," generally confined to our Lord's immediate apostles, and which has come down to us hallowed by the associations of eighteen centuries. Let our ministers look to it, for it seems a much more respectable and dignified title than their own—at least, as Sam Weller said of the word "circumvented," as compared with "circumscribed," when composing his famous "Walentine," it would seem to "mean more."

Finally, if the movement is a good one, why do the best of our ministers and laymen stand aloof from it? If worthy of encouragement, it is a pity it should be left

to the guidance of men, many of whom murder the Queen's English, and commit grammatical havoc enough to raise Lindley Murray's ghost, not to speak of crying offences against good taste, common sense, and sound logic. If they cannot conscientiously take part with these men, let them initiate meetings of their own, and counteract extravagance and rant by solid, decorous, intelligible, and earnest appeal; let them follow the example of Dr. Robert Lee, who (to the credit of the working-classes of Edinburgh, be it said) found no difficulty in bringing crowded audiences together to listen to plain practical expositions of Christian and social duty, delivered to rational men and women in a rational manner, and without the lightning and the thunder which seem to be the ordinary revivalist's whole stock-in-trade.

NOEL PATON'S "ILLUSTRATIONS OF SLAVERY."

THE brow of genius is encircled by a halo diviner than its own when its efforts are consecrated to the welfare of humanity. The inspired artist—whether in literature, painting, or any of the arts—who feels and works up to the conviction that his gift is a trust from God for the good of man, is, by "right divine," the world's teacher, moulding its opinions, ennobling its aspirations, giving it a glimpse of the time, far distant it may be, but sure—

> When mercy, justice, purity on each longing heart enthroned,
> Men shall nobly live this little life in the light of that beyond.

Not that we think genius most powerful for good when it sets itself avowedly, through the medium of any of its productions, to inculcate a direct lesson, for the best and most influential works are suggestive, not didactic. A book or a painting, full of thought and feeling that touches the depths of our common nature, produced

without any directly moral purpose, will influence more deeply and more permanently than any—where, at every step, the voice of the moral "guide, philosopher, and friend" is sounding in our ears, telling us what to admire and love, and what to shun. All works on such a false principle as this have been, and must necessarily be, more or less failures. This cannot be better illustrated than by some of the "Temperance Tales" and other teetotal fictions with which the age abounds, which, by much trumpeting, may attain a temporary popularity, and then pass quietly to the regions of Chaos and Old Night, to be remembered no more for ever. The writer having only one end in view, all his ingenuity must be bent to the attainment of it; and hence his pages are crowded with scenes and characters which, however irrelevant and unnatural, bring the story to the foregone *denouement*, and violently point the moral, though they cannot be said to adorn the tale. Evils, in the body social or politic, when viewed from one point, and shown up for a certain purpose, may be readily exaggerated out of all proportion to truth and nature, insomuch that the pictures of them become caricatures, not portraits; and this is an achievement within the reach of very humble talents. Your own proper nose, for example, may be considerably beyond the usual size, but that is no reason why

the artist should represent your face as being wholly or even chiefly, composed of that useful protuberance. The artist is bound to give the nose its due proportion and place, in keeping with the other features; but he is not entitled to devote his skill entirely to the delineation of that feature alone, otherwise his production, however funny or sensational it may be, is assuredly not a likeness. And so with books or pictures which profess to illustrate and enforce particular views and opinions on social problems.

For our own part, we cannot read a book that sets forth in the preface the moral it proposes to inculcate, and then, at the end, recapitulates the said moral, in case you may forget it. Such finger-post literature and morality may do for children, but is sorry food for men and women. The influence of a picture or a book should breathe from it as fragrance breathes from a flower; and the lesson it teaches will be felt to be all the more powerful, because it has been suggested, not taught. Considered in this light, the pregnant meaning embodied in the lines of Tennyson may be partially appreciated :—

"Oh, to what uses shall we put
The wild-wood flower that simply blows?
And is there any moral shut
Within the bosom of the rose?

But any man that walks the mead,
  In bud, or blade, or bloom, may find,
According as his humours lead,
  A meaning suited to his mind.

And liberal applications lie
  In art, like Nature, dearest friend;
And 'twere to cramp its use, if I
  Should hook it to some useful end."

But while all this is true, to a greater or lesser degree, of all productions whose avowed object is the inculcation of particular views on certain social and moral problems, it is perhaps true, to the least extent, as respects the subject of slavery. For it is impossible to exaggerate the horrors of slavery. War, terrible though it be, has, in many instances, helped civilisation, developed valour and chivalry, and shown the world not a few examples of the sublimest self-abnegation. Religious persecution has been a hideous and stupendous evil; but the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church; "and what," as the wisest and calmest of modern essayists observes, "I venture to think of more importance than the establishment of any earthly Church, the blood of martyrs has been the seed of freedom of opinion." "But," the same essayist continues, "what can we say for slavery and the slave trade? What good can be said to have come out of

them? What they may bring out is hid in the inscrutable ways of God, and one is loath to be'ieve that all this misery goes for nothing. But at present what have we? Sugar—for incalculable cruelty, for evils which, even in this world, one sees no end to, danger of states, degradation of humanity—for all these things, more rice, cotton, and sugar. That is chiefly what we get."

We therefore think that Noel Paton has worthily employed his genius in illustrating, as he has done, this great curse and shame of humanity, in the five sketches entitled "Bond and Free," commissioned by the Glasgow Art Union. Here the painter has compressed into a space that may be taken in at a glance the chief features of the infamous institution. The first sketch, entitled "*Verbum Dei*," represents the "Divine Man," our common brother—one hand uplifted to heaven, the other laid upon the head of a beautiful quadroon girl, surrounded by a number of abject "chattels," out of whose eyes, nevertheless, human souls do visibly look, who are listening, with a glimmering apprehension of their meaning, to the strange and heavenly words the Saviour is uttering, "God has made of one blood all nations of men." One day, masters and slaves alike, shall learn the full import of that divine speech.

The next sketch is the "Slave Auction," with its interesting "trade announcements" — "Selling off,

without reserve, Prime Lot of Niggers," "Horses," "Dogs," "Rewards for Runaways," "Bloodhounds." The chief figure is the auctioneer, submitting to "public competition" the beautiful quadroon of the first sketch. While she covers her face with her hands, and is overwhelmed with her great grief, the auctioneer, doubtless an eloquent George Robins, spreads out her flowing tresses to the wind, and dilates upon her many fine points—calling upon bidders to be in time, as the "lot" is going positive-ly. Behind these is a ruffian dragging a mother from her child, and on whose face not the slightest shadow of human sympathy is visible. Indeed, all round, the moral result of the iniquitous traffic seems to have burnt itself into every line and feature of the countenances of these dealers in human blood. At a little distance to the front may be seen a wealthy planter and his two daughters, on horseback, surveying with a placid indifference a scene for which devils, if they did not tremble at it, would feel some touch of sympathy.

The third sketch, entitled "The Capture," represents a bloodhound and its masters on the track of some miserable runaways—husband, wife, and child. The dog is in the act of springing on the unfortunate woman, who, holding her little child aloft, bends in horror and despair over the dead body of her husband.

Lying there stark and stiff, the great emancipator, Death, has been before them, and the poor slave has obtained his freedom at last. Looking to the face of the animal and the countenances of his masters, it is hard to say which seems most the incarnation of ferocity. On both are written the deep lines of moral degradation; for we believe that dogs have characters as well as men, and that they, too, may be degraded by their companionship and work.

The following sketch, "The Rescue," represents the capture of a slaver. A crew of stalwart British tars have torn up her hatchways, through which the light of heaven and the light of freedom are poured upon the sweltering mass of negroes in the hold. Some are already rigid in death, some are struggling in their last agony, and others are gazing up from the depths of their floating sepulchre at the anxious, sympathising faces of their deliverers. One poor creature, less intent on his own release than the safety of his child, is in the act of handing it up to the rough but tender grasp of a British sailor, perhaps himself a father, and who is thinking of his own little ones in their happy home of freedom far away—"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." Oh! we could almost wish that some of the paltering *white* apologists of slavery had a month's cruise in that same hold! We think they

would leave it with their feelings and opinions considerably changed.

The last sketch of the series is entitled "Freedom," and represents an aged negro and his family in their tidy and comfortable dwelling, all engaged in reading or listening to the WORD. This we think the least satisfactory sketch of the whole. It is somewhat stagey, and the idea is trite and obvious. But freedom and its innumerable blessings, while felt and enjoyed as facts, cannot in its wholeness be put into a picture any more than the winds of heaven; and, perhaps, as a finale to the sketches, and apart from an allegorical embodiment of the subject, the painter could not have done better than represent the emancipated sons and daughters of bondage, as occupied in the perusal and study of that Divine charter of man's spiritual liberty, which says:—"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Freedom, wrote old John Barbour 500 years ago, and nothing better has been said about it yet:—

"A! Fredome is a nobill thing!
Fredome mayse man to haiff liking!
Fredome all solace to man giffis:
He levys at ese that frely levys!
A noble hart may haiff nane ese
Na ellys nocht that may him plese,
Gyff fredome faillyth; for fre liking
Is yearnyt our all othir thing

Na he, that ay has levyt fre,
May nocht knaw weill the propyrte,
The angyr, na the wrechyt dome,
That is cowplyt to foule thyrldome.
  But if he had assayed it,
Than all perquer he suld it wyt;
And suld think fredome mar to pryse
Than all the gold in warld that is."

HENRY GLASSFORD BELL'S "MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS."

THERE are certain scenes, events, and characters in history that are invested with the interest of a perennial fascination for all readers, high and low, learned and unlearned alike, and whose power to attract and rivet the minds of men, instead of diminishing, seems only to grow with the lapse of time. The annals of our own country, indeed, are full of the deeds and lives of remarkable or illustrious persons about whom it seems as if we could never know enough, and who, although they only live in books, have an existence more real than the men and women we meet with every day; and among all the famous personages whose careers have glorified or disgraced the pages of Scottish story, Mary Stewart stands forth pre-eminent. If a romancer had invented such an imaginary being, and traced ideally her strange and startling fortunes through all their rapid

alternations of sunshine, gloom, and storm, and death, his work would have been pronounced untrue to nature; but nature and reality often produce works that leave the romancer's art far behind, and of such was Mary Queen of Scots. Her bright and happy girlhood at the Court of France—her widowhood at nineteen—her assumption of the Scottish crown, surrounded by fierce nobles and still fiercer ecclesiastics—her ill-starred marriage with the weak and sensual Darnley—the murder of the wretched Rizzio in her own apartment and at her very feet—her indomitable courage and thirst for vengeance upon her enemies—the terrible tragedy at Kirk-of-Field on that memorable February morning, that rid her for ever of her credulous boy-husband, and the sound of which woke the sleeping citizens—her guilty and infatuated passion for the grim, unprincipled, and reckless Bothwell—her captivity and escape from Lochleven—her long imprisonment at Fotheringay—her pitiful but calm and dignified death—and, shining over all, her transcendent beauty—all go to make up a picture to which history can hardly present a parallel. Mr. Bell in his "Life of Mary Queen of Scots," and again in his poem, has given ample proof of the interest he has felt in this sad and wonderful story; and although we cannot accept his presentment of the character of Mary Stewart without many abatements, we can sym-

pathise as deeply as himself with her life-long misfortunes (self-caused or not) and her tragic end. Her extraordinary beauty and powers of fascination exercised a wonderful influence on her contemporaries, and the same influence still is more or less potent with many of her biographers. For there is a strong tendency in the human mind to associate *goodness* with beauty, and men never think of an ugly angel. But Mary was no angel, and no one knew this better than herself. For, apart from all her other guilty conduct, her complicity in the death of the miserable Darnley is now placed beyond a doubt. For proof of which, take the following extract from a letter written to her paramour, the villain Bothwell on the eve of the Kirk-of-Field tragedy :—"I must go forward," she says, "with my odious purpose. . . Have no evil opinion of me for this." She concludes —"You yourself are the cause of it; for my own private revenge I would not do it to him. Seeing, then, that to obey you, my dear love, I spare neither honour, conscience, hazard, nor greatness; take it, I pray you, in good part. Look not at that woman, whose false tears should not be so much regarded as the true and faithful labour which I am bearing to deserve her place; to obtain which—against my nature—I betray those that may hinder me. God forgive me, and God give you, my only love, the happiness and prosperity which

your humble and faithful friend desires for you. She hopes soon to be another thing to you. It is late. I could write to you for ever; yet now I will kiss your hand and end." Darkly and deeply criminal although it be, the tone of piteous self-excuse and pathetic protestation that runs through this letter may well touch the roughest heart. Her extraordinary courage and elasticity of spirit, that again and again enabled her to rise renovated and strong from amid calamity and ruin that seemed doomed to crush, form no small part of the spell that invests every movement of the fair and gifted but luckless Queen; and we feel that it was no bravado, but the true spirit of the woman that spoke when she wished she were a man "to know what life it was to lie all night in the field, or to walk on the cawsey with a Glasgow buckler and a broadsword." Had Mary Stewart been properly mated, the story of her life might have been far less interesting, and would probably have been far more innocent. As it is, innocence has little to do with the narrative. "She is grand in her passion, in her struggle, in her self-abandonment, in her guilt."

But, angel or fiend, saint or sinner, we think the committee of our Art Union have done wisely and well to select for their presentation work this year illustrations of some of the more salient points of a thrilling story whose interest never flags; and it is creditable alike to

the city and the Union that the text illustrated should have been produced by a poet who is one of ourselves, and who is so well known as an able lawyer, a sound judge, and an accomplished author. Mr. Bell's fine poem is now so generally known and appreciated that there is no need for commenting on it here; but those who desire to possess it in a style of sumptuous typography, and adorned with splendid photographs, will find their guinea subscription well bestowed. The paintings from which the photographs are taken are the production of Robert Herdman, Esq., R.S.A., whose name is sufficient guarantee for the excellence of his work. They consist of four subjects:—"The Convent Garden;" "The Farewell to France;" "The Abdication Signed;" and "The End—Fotheringay." In the first we have Mary Seton, Mary Hamilton, Mary Beton, and Mary Carmichael—the four Scotch Marys. In the centre the young Queen, surrounded by all the adjuncts of "innocence and ease," full of the glee of happy girlhood, and beneath an unclouded heaven, little dreaming of the dark clouds gathering over the northern sky. In the "Farewell to La Belle France," when she sails to take possession of her turbulent kingdom, we see the Queen seated on deck, "refusing to be comforted" or to go below till the last inch of French soil faded from her sight; her beautiful face full of wistful regret, and

shaded by foreboding anticipation, remembering the happy past, and trying to scan the dim and uncertain future.

"One gaze again, one long last gaze, 'Adieu fair France to thee,'
The breeze comes forth, she is alone on the unconscious sea."

Between this scene and "The Abdication Signed," in Lochleven Castle, what a crowd of strange and stirring events were compressed into this young life! Here, in one of the old castle chambers, stern men stood menacing their Queen till she should stoop to sign the traitorous scroll that snatched the Crown from her ancestral line. The deed is done, and Mary stands erect with an air of beautiful defiance, and looking every inch a queen. The ancient spirit gleams through her lovely countenance, and seems to say the nerve and will are here, and the opportunity will come to redeem this act of deep humiliation.

Last scene of all that ends this strange eventful history—"Fotheringay." In that grey February morning, when prepared for the fatal block, she was the only one, among all her attendants, who preserved her calm. Pale, worn, feeble of limb, but strong of heart, she mounts the scaffold, and, repeating in solemn abstraction the penitential psalms, she is the only one there who preserves a serene composure in the face of death. At

length, uncovering her fair neck, she lays it on the block—the headsman's work is done—and all is over. "And now," as a recent eloquent writer says, "her last act was done with such nobility, with such solemnity, as has all but awed the world out of recollection of the stormy scenes before. For our own part, we offer no plea for Mary Stewart, nor attempt to veil the crimes of her career; but, as she stands, we know of no more wonderful figure in all the long panorama of history."

MEDICINE AND MERCHANDISE.

(*The Summing up of a Newspaper Correspondence.*)

SIR,—I am neither a medical nor a commercial man; nevertheless, I hope I am not the less qualified to form and express an opinion on the controversy between Dr. G. and Mr. E., which is a very pretty quarrel as it stands. While I think it is wrong, in a world where all are so mutually dependent, and where all should be mutually helpful, to exalt one profession or pursuit at the expense of another, there can be no doubt that some are inherently more noble than others. To cure disease, to save life, to mitigate the pangs of death, is surely in itself a nobler occupation than to deal in potatoes, or even to print calicoes. And in speaking to a number of young men whose professional duties will shortly call them into the most delicate, important, and solemn relations with numbers of their fellow-creatures, I cannot [illegible]e Professor was far wrong in insisting that their

conduct must be influenced by something higher than mere money motives. This feeling, while it may be, and ought to be, blended with the skill and knowledge which go to form the able medical practitioner, and which, strictly speaking, are his capital, gives that knowledge and skill a double efficacy in all his professional intercourse, for it is something akin to an ever-present sense of responsibility connected with the discharge of all his duties. The doctor who does not practise his profession in this spirit has yet much to learn; and young and generous minds have need of the warning; for the spirit of worldliness, money-getting, and self-seeking will assert itself time enough, as it does with the most of us; which is no reason, however, why we should not be told there is a "more excellent way."

But, leaving the doctor and the merchant to settle that point to their own satisfaction, there is one principle Mr. E. lays down with a dogmatism proportioned to its absurdity. He says—"The commercial man and the professional man stand exactly in the same position, adopting different means to attain the same end (*i.e.*, the attainment of a livelihood and a competence); and I hold that the test of ability is exactly the same, viz., success." Now, *I* hold such a dictum to be equally erroneous, vulgar, and degrading, and were it the deep and practical belief of our best commercial men, Professor

G.'s remarks on them, as a class, would be more than merited. Success! The making of money the test of ability! The whole moral value of our social life summed up in the sublime axiom—"Success is virtue and misfortune crime!" Well, I think illustrations are neither few nor far to seek to show that money-making is a pursuit level to the meanest capacity, both moral and intellectual; and that, taken *per se* as the test of ability, it is a superiority that poorer men—professional or commercial—with better hearts and brains, may well afford to despise. And I think I could run over the names of a few men in this old world's past history who would fail ignominiously if subjected to Mr. E.'s lofty test, but who nevertheless have been mankind's highest benefactors—who *have* been successful in the noblest sense, and who have left a track of light across the centuries, in lives, or deeds, or books of priceless worth, when the mighty merchants of Tyre and Sidon are remembered no more for ever.

> "Have we not known a man full of himself,
> His business, money, preparations, schemes,
> Without whose aid the world could not go round,
> Die, and be no more missed from out the crowd
> Than the sere leaf from off the forest tree?"

For what is success? To amass money? or to try to live a noble and unworldly life? To convert yourself,

by many years of strenuous labour, into a machine? or to strive to develop yourself into a man, which I think, upon the whole, was God's intention? When that is not achieved, but frustrated, any amount of money success will be but barren compensation. An eminent French philosopher was invited to accept a distinguished chair in the university of another country, and while it was intimated that his emoluments would be doubled, it was also stated that his time would be much more occupied than before in the discharge of his duties. The philosopher, grateful for the intended honour, replied that, in his present position, he had already sufficient for his wants, and that he could not afford to waste his time in making money. Possibly the philosopher's bank-book might have furnished only poor evidence of his ability, and his "success," according to the modern gospel, might have been pronounced a failure.

Mr. E. must know that he is talking "bunkum" when he says, "I look upon them (my class) as the pioneers of civilisation, and the backbone of every great work and enterprise throughout the world." Professor G., in his address, was speaking of the motives which ought to animate the medical practitioner, and this magniloquent self-laudation on the part of Mr. E. means nothing if it does not mean that his class are "pioneers and backbones," &c., from the loftiest motives of commercial

benevolence, and that they "go down to the sea in ships," in which all thoughts of profit are quite sunk. No, no. This won't do. If we are to look for the true "pioneers" of civilisation, I am afraid we must go a little farther back than these days, and we may chance to light upon samples of them in some of England's forgotten worthies, of whom Mr. Froude discourses so well—men who, at the call of duty and their country, "took their lives in their hands" with a noble indifference; who cherished their personal honour, and the honour of their native land, as a second religion, and by whose achievements the triumphs of modern commerce have become possible.—I am, &c.

GULLIBILITY—WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

It is a natural tendency of man to run into extremes. Seldom it is that he is able to hit the happy mean in any of the matters that directly or relatively affect either his mental, moral, or physical economy. Timidity, on the one hand, restrains him within, or temerity, on the other, impels him beyond the proper limit; and in nothing connected with human nature do these remarks hold more true than in matters of belief. Judging from the past history of mankind, we would say that, upon the whole, gullibility, or undue readiness to believe or to be imposed upon, has always preponderated over incredulity. To what other cause can we refer the innumerable fanatics and enthusiasts who have, from time to time, sprung up to delude themselves and blindfold the world. No absurdity seems too huge for ignorance to swallow; and this obtains to such an extent, that it would seem just in proportion as a theory

transcends the comprehension of superstitious and clouded minds, so has it the chance of commanding their belief. Bold and unscrupulous men, with intellects superior to their age, have often seized this weak point of human character, and rendered it subservient to their selfish ends. Let us consider the vast influence for good or evil that a gifted mind exercises, even at the present day, in enlightened Europe, and we will then be able to appreciate the power of the man who had the ability to frame, and the energy to enforce, a system of belief (fraught though it may be with the grossest absurdities), in an age and among a people shrouded in intellectual and moral darkness. Of this we have a remarkable instance in the case of Mahomet. Favoured by nature with strong mental endowments, ambitious of becoming the founder of a religion, and unscrupulous regarding the means for effecting his purposes of self-aggrandisement, this man, by a series of impostures, artfully contrived and skilfully executed, appeared amongst his countrymen, claiming the power and dignity of God's prophet and vicegerent upon earth. He framed and promulgated a code of religious laws for the government of his proselytes, stamped these laws with the seal of divine authority—and maintaining, by deceptious connivance, his assumed character, even after death, he sowed the seeds of a

faith, which, extensively believed in, even during his lifetime, now shelters upwards of one hundred millions of human beings.

Even in our own enlightened age we have an Emanuel Swedenborg, a Joanna Southcote, and a Joe Smith, each with their deluded retinue of believers. The first two, as much self-deluded, perhaps, as deluding others, have well-nigh passed from the public mind. But the impudent falsehoods of the American impostor are still fresh upon the memory. That an illiterate man, as destitute of common honesty as common sense, should be able, in this era of education and intelligence, to palm a tissue of foundationless, self-concocted trickery upon a people so naturally shrewd and humbug-detecting as our transatlantic brethren, seems sufficiently strange. But that stories so utterly absurd as those given to the world by the pseudo-prophet Smith, should find believers in Scotland, among a people proverbial for general intelligence, deep religious convictions, and worldly cautiousness, is altogether unaccountable. Yet such is the case. We may regret it; but while pained, we can scarcely help smiling at such a dreary exhibition of the gullibility of human nature. Mormonism may take root in shallow soil, but it can never grow; and the best guarantee for this is the daily increasing intelligence of the people. So sure as the giant oak overshadows

the weeds that encircle his roots, so certainly will the everlasting tree of truth eventually overshadow the tangled weeds of error and destroy their nutriment. The oak, indeed, from the time when its humble rudiment, the acorn, is dropped into the soil, may be long in arriving at mature development, but its permanency on this account is only the more enhanced; while the weeds that circle its base, growing up with the rapidity of ephemera, are doomed to equally brief continuance.

The prevalence of extreme gullibility has, in many cases, owed its existence to that important, but often ill-regulated, element in man's mental constitution, imagination—combined with a huge love of the marvellous. Such was the source whence sprung the hosts of fairies, hobgoblins, brownies, kelpies, and good and evil spirits of every class and genus, that infested this decent jog-trot world of ours, little more than a century ago. Little more than a century ago, did we say? We have reason to believe that even in these days of steam, there are not a few individuals, and, mayhap, amiable and respectable individuals too, who yet remain orthodox to the creed of their ancient and respected grandfathers touching the visible existence of the supernatural people above alluded to. We have chanced to argue with a specimen of this gradually dying-out class of believers, and while testing their cherished theory by the light of

modern science and the logic of common sense, the only reward of our laudably strenuous exertions has been to realise once more the truth of the couplet,

> "Convince a man against his will,
> He's of the same opinion still."

And we have turned away more in merriment than in anger. There is a certain share of admiration due to the man who, through good and evil report, clings to his opinions, right or wrong, like the limpet to the rock. You may argue with such a one till doomsday, on any given question, his mind is made up not to be convinced; and fixing himself sturdily down upon *his* conviction, there he stands, heedless of, and defying all the efforts to dislodge him. He tells you plainly, "You have your belief and I have mine, and I am determined to maintain that to the last!" Heroic resolution! Worthy of a better cause!

Truly, in matters of belief some men are but children of a larger growth. When passing our boyhood's days in the retired seclusion of a remote country district, we can well remember that on more than one occasion we did personally experience all the horrors of a conscientious belief in the actuality of "bogles." With ghastly face, and bonnet almost supported by the points of our bristling hair, we have rushed past the night-enveloped

MEDICINE AND MERCHANDISE.

(*The Summing up of a Newspaper Correspondence.*)

SIR,—I am neither a medical nor a commercial man; nevertheless, I hope I am not the less qualified to form and express an opinion on the controversy between Dr. G. and Mr. E., which is a very pretty quarrel as it stands. While I think it is wrong, in a world where all are so mutually dependent, and where all should be mutually helpful, to exalt one profession or pursuit at the expense of another, there can be no doubt that some are inherently more noble than others. To cure disease, to save life, to mitigate the pangs of death, is surely in itself a nobler occupation than to deal in potatoes, or even to print calicoes. And in speaking to a number of young men whose professional duties will shortly call them into the most delicate, important, and solemn relations with numbers of their fellow-creatures, I cannot think the Professor was far wrong in insisting that their

conduct must be influenced by something higher than mere money motives. This feeling, while it may be, and ought to be, blended with the skill and knowledge which go to form the able medical practitioner, and which, strictly speaking, are his capital, gives that knowledge and skill a double efficacy in all his professional intercourse, for it is something akin to an ever-present sense of responsibility connected with the discharge of all his duties. The doctor who does not practise his profession in this spirit has yet much to learn; and young and generous minds have need of the warning; for the spirit of worldliness, money-getting, and self-seeking will assert itself time enough, as it does with the most of us; which is no reason, however, why we should not be told there is a "more excellent way."

But, leaving the doctor and the merchant to settle that point to their own satisfaction, there is one principle Mr. E. lays down with a dogmatism proportioned to its absurdity. He says—"The commercial man and the professional man stand exactly in the same position, adopting different means to attain the same end (*i.e.*, the attainment of a livelihood and a competence); and I hold that the test of ability is exactly the same, viz., success." Now, *I* hold such a dictum to be equally erroneous, vulgar, and degrading, and were it the deep and practical belief of our best commercial men, Professor

the said gentleman to perform numerous astounding feats of an unprecedented kind. Here was a chance not to be slipped. John's bump of wonder (gullibility?) was instantly in unwonted activity. To such an extent had the intoxicating placard operated, that long before the hour of meeting, the exhibition hall was crowded, and multitudes were compelled to go away unable to gain admission. The *dénouement* was what might have been expected. While the wonderment-excited crowd was stretching and straining their anxious eyes in the direction of the stage to discover the extraordinary performer, that worthy gentleman had judged it prudent to make a secret retreat; which laudable object, preconcerted arrangements enabled him the more readily to effect. It may be supposed that the *results* of this experiment on John's gullibility formed an agreeable companion in the flight of the impudent and unscrupulous rogue.

Verily there are many phases of this self-delusion. What was the recent railway mania but an exhibition of gullibility on a grand scale, in which a nation was at once the performer and the dupe? Intoxicated with visions of boundless wealth—spurred on by a mammon phrenzy—thousands rushed into speculations, which calm reflection looked upon as madness. A letter of allocation was hugged to the soul as the open sesame

to riches. Specimens of humanity hardly escaped from petticoats and pinafores, talked with knowing look of nothing but "scrip" and "premium;" and hoary-headed age with one foot in eternity and the other on the shore of time, might be seen tracing its palsied signature to letters of application, and hastening to be rich. *Imposing* prospectuses, headed by "influential committees," "eminent engineers," and "solicitors of high standing," descended for a while from the "railway world" like showers. All was bright and glittering, aud as substantial too as a Russian ice palace while the frost continues; but the *thaw* came, and many are submerged by the "breaking up" of the once sparkling edifice—and—and—

Many would laugh at an individual allowing himself to be duped by a "bottle conjuror" now-a-days; but does not the history of the railway mania prove that dupes of equal magnitude yet exist? We look upon this national misfortune as one of the most melancholy instances at once of human weakness and human depravity. Miserable self-delusion it is, both for time and eternity, to concentrate the noble energies of the human soul upon the acquisition of mere wealth. If but one-half of that anxiety, deep and intense, which is displayed in the pursuit of riches, were evinced in the cause of universal benevolence and genuine morality,

what a different aspect would our world present? How many anxious days and sleepless nights will the *loss of gold create*, while the *loss of heaven* scarcely excites a thought? We are none of those who preach up poverty as a blessing, and tell the man pressed by its sharp gripes, to be content with his lot. No; poverty is an evil, and we joy when we see honest industry shaking off its thraldom. But when gold, mere gold, is in man's affections elevated above the Creator, when it transforms the hnman soul from its Godlike essence into pounds, shillings, and pence, it becomes a tenfold deeper curse than poverty. Gold should occupy its legitimate, and that is an infinitely subordinate, position, and be valued and sought after only as a means to an end—to promote the greatest amount of true happiness, individual and social. The tendencies of the present day are, in this respect, earthward, grovelling, and base. Never was the struggle for mere wealth more general or intense; and seldom has such an unworthy struggle met a more signal and worthy disappointment than that produced by the last few months. So may it ever be where gold is sought only for its own sake. We pity the blind idolator who prostrates himself before "*stocks* and stones." Perchance we contribute to a missionary fund to emancipate him from this gross superstition, but we ought not to neglect our own manumission from the slavery of mam-

mon. That man endowed with an immortal soul—"that pearl of matchless price"—should yield up its sublime energies to such slavery, is, with a heaven to hope for and a hell to fear, appalling infatuation. Truly this is, *this is* the climax of wretched, miserable "self-delusion."

Occasional manifestations of gullibility on a grand scale would seem almost inseparable from human nature. Its workings besides are widely diffused through all the ramifications of social life. Self-delusion! How many whose lives from the cradle to the grave are little else? Nursed amid prejudice and intolerance, the bigot denounces all religions save his own false, and lives and dies in the delusion that he alone is right. The poet, the painter, and the soldier rushing up ambition's path, and sacrificing time and talents on the altar of fame, find after years of struggling that they have grasped a shadow. The victim of intemperance seeking happiness among the elements of misery, bartering health and wealth for woe and want, perchance treads the road of ruin till the heavy hand of self-induced disease strips the false colours from his wretched life, and displays the true horrors of his situation. The Pharisee, with long face and longer prayers, deludes himself, and thinks to delude Omniscience, by the observance of *form* for *spirit*. The man who seeks and wins a woman's affec-

tions for her money; who scruples not to immolate love and duty on the shrine of mammon, often finds too late that a life of married misery is but ill compensated by the possession of cold, affectionless gold. He whose precious youth has been absorbed in material pursuits, who has neglected self-cultivation, finds that an old age barren of internal sources of enjoyment, is a privation that wealth and luxury can never balance. In thousands of other instances do we discover self-delusion at work; and all to the reflecting mind read an important moral lesson. They show us "godlike" man, with all his boasted powers, wandering with childlike eagerness and imbecility after the "Will o' Wisp" meteors of unsubstantial fancies—ever anxious to secure happiness—ever deceiving himself by embracing its shadow. Truly did the poet speak when he described him as being—

> "In doubt his mind or body to prefer,
> Born but to die, and reasoning but to err;
> Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
> Whether he thinks too little or too much;
> Chaos of thought and passion all confused,
> Still by himself abused or disabused;
> Created half to rise and half to fall,
> Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
> Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurled,
> The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!"—*Pope.*

VOLTAIRE.

FRANCIS MARIE AROUET DE VOLTAIRE, one of the most distinguished men of modern times, was born at Chatenay, near Paris, on the 20th of February, 1694. His father, Francis Arouet, notary of the Chatelet and treasurer of the Chamber of Accounts, being in easy circumstances, caused his son to be educated with the greatest care. Even in his earliest years the boy gave promise of the future man, both in respect to morals and intellect—for he says of himself that he made verses before he was out of his cradle; and one of his tutors predicted that he would become the Coryphæus of Deism in France—a prediction which was but too well verified. Many of his essays, written between twelve and fourteen, so far from bearing marks of juvenility, would do honour to far maturer years. His father was anxious that the young Voltaire should devote himself to the profession of an advocate; but after submitting to the dry details

of law for a short period, he betook himself to the more congenial field of general literature, in which henceforth he was to become so famous. Voltaire early imbibed a propensity for satire; and for some philippics aimed against the government, of which he was erroneously supposed to be the author, he was imprisoned by the regent Orleans in the Bastile for nearly a year. In this situation he planned the Henriade; and in 1718 his tragedy of Œdipus was brought upon the stage, with the most unequivocal success, being performed no less than forty-five times in one year. His father having witnessed the representation of his son's production, was so much pleased that he embraced him with tears of joy in his eyes, and henceforth left him to the bent of his own inclinations.

In 1722, having made an excursion to Brussels, he became acquainted with the celebrated Jean Baptiste Rousseau; but the characters of the two poets were so totally at variance, that they speedily became disgusted with each other, and their acquaintance terminated in a complete separation.

His reckless vivacity and frequent attacks on religion subjected him to many annoyances. Having offended a proud young nobleman, who, in consequence, had caused his servant to chastise him, Voltaire was again imprisoned in the Bastile, in the thirty-second year of

his age. After six months confinement he was released on condition of his quitting the kingdom. He accordingly came to England, carrying with him his Henriade, in order to finish and publish the work in a land of liberty. He was favourably received by George I., and still more so by the Princess of Wales, who kindly exerted herself in procuring subscriptions, which ultimately laid the foundation of his fortunes; for, on being permitted to return to France in 1728, he embarked his acquisitions in a lottery, by which, and by other fortunate speculations, he realised extensive property. He now published his Lettres Philosophiques. In these he attacked the pretensions of the church with such vehemence, and gave way to such bold expressions and indecent witticisms against religion, that the parliament of Paris, in 1733, condemned the work to the flames and issued a warrant for the author's arrest. To escape the storm he had raised, he retired to the estate of Cairey, at Vassi, in Champagne, the property of the Marchioness du Chatelet, who treated him with the greatest kindness, and in whose mansion he passed several years in concealment. Here he entered on the study of Newton's Principia, which was then totally unknown in France, and which the numerous disciples of Des Cartes had no wish to disseminate. The result was his "Elemens de la Philosophie de Newton," which

introduced his countrymen to the great discoveries of the English philosopher. Abstruse science, however, was not Voltaire's element, and he soon returned to the culture of the belles-lettres. In 1736 he produced his Alzire, and in 1741 his Mohammed; but the latter having been represented to the procureur-general as a performance offensive to religion, Voltaire was ordered by Cardinal Fleury to withdraw it from the stage; but the pope (Benedict XIV.) subsequently took the play under his protection, and it has since maintained its place in the drama, with the reputation of being one of the best French productions of its kind. In 1743, he produced Merope, a species of tragedy unprecedented on the French stage, presenting the apparent anomaly of a play abounding with the most exquisite pathos, without any intermixture of love. In 1749, the Marchioness du Chatelet dying, Voltaire returned to Paris, where his stay was but short. Frederick the Great, then Crown Prince of Prussia, who had a great fondness for French literature, and who had been in correspondence with Voltaire for a considerable time, now gave the latter an invitation to live with him, which was accepted towards the end of August, 1750. Here he was treated by the king with the greatest distinction, and in a moment of enthusiasm, Frederick is said to have kissed his guest's hand. On his arrival at Berlin he was immediately

presented with the Order of Merit, the key of chamberlain, and a pension of 20,000 livres. A suite of apartments were appointed to him under those of the king, whom he was allowed to visit at stated hours, to read with him the best ancient or modern works, and to assist his Majesty in the literary productions by which he relieved the cares of government. In his revision of the royal author's works, Voltaire tells us he never failed to praise the good and quietly strike out the bad. But this friendly and confiding intercourse was but of brief continuance. His ever-restless temperament involved him about this time in a quarrel with Mapertuis, the celebrated French geometrician and astronomer, the president of the Berlin Academy. The result was Frederick's displeasure, and Voltaire's dismissal. Mapertuis, however, seems to have accomplished the poet's disgrace by identifying his own cause with some disrespectful observations which Voltaire was alleged to have made regarding the king. Among others Mapertuis was at some pains to have it reported at court, that one day while Voltaire was engaged in translating into French, General Manstein's Russian Memoirs, that officer happening to be present, and the king having, as was his wont, sent some verses to Voltaire for examination, the latter said to Manstein, "Let us leave off for the present, my friend; you see the king has sent me

his dirty linen to wash—I will wash your's another time." Thus under the king's displeasure, he in the most respectful manner returned his chamberlain's key, and the cross of the Order of Merit, accompanied by four lines of verse in which he delicately compares himself to a jealous lover sending back the picture of his mistress. Frederick, however, returned the key and ribbon, but this act was not followed by immediate reconciliation. About this period he visited the Duchess of Gotha, who ever afterwards honoured him with her friendship. During his absence, Mapertuis again succeeded in depriving him of the king's favour, and he resolved on returning to France. While on his journey, he was arrested, by Frederick's orders, at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, compelled to deliver up various productions of the king, and to resign the chamberlain's key, his Order, and his promise of a pension of 20,000 livres. He was shortly afterwards released, and he did not fail to revenge himself on Mapertuis, by showering on his devoted head all the annoyance that his humiliating raillery and cutting satire enabled him to inflict.

Voltaire was now desirous of residing in Paris, but the witty and licentious poem "La Pucelle d'Orleans," which he produced about this period, effectually closed the gates of the city against him. He, therefore, purchased a country house near Geneva; but his restless

disposition having involved him in the party squabbles of the place, he found it necessary to quit the republic. At this time Jean Jacques Rousseau sent him his celebrated essay which gained the prize given by the Academy at Dijon for the best answer to the question, "Whether the progress of the sciences and arts has contributed to corrupt or purify manners?" and in which this paradoxical, though eloquent and talented writer, maintained the effect had been injurious. Voltaire, in replying to his correspondent, among many flattering compliments, makes the following sarcastic remark—"When I read your treatise I desire to creep upon all fours." This ridicule made the author of Emilie his implacable enemy. In consequence of the contentions to which we have alluded, Voltaire now found it necessary to remove from the neighbourhood of Geneva. He therefore purchased the estate of Ferney, in the Pays de Gese, where he resided during the remainder of his life, with his niece Madame Denis. Here he afforded aid and protection to many persecuted individuals, and exerted his powerful talents in vindicating the innocence of various unfortunate persons who had fallen victims to the fanaticism of the times. It was at this time also that he composed his masterly treatise on toleration. From this retreat he poured out an exhaustless variety of works, which were widely

circulated and eagerly read. A decided enemy of tyranny and oppression, these writings generally breathe a spirit of uncompromising hostility to civil and ecclesiastical tyranny. The boldest eloquence, coupled with the most unsparing ridicule, are launched against everything that contravened his ideas of freedom and independence. To priestly domination and intolerance he was particularly hostile; but we too often find his attacks on the professors of religion made the vehicle of insidious and flagitious sentiments against religion itself. His motives, moreover, were not always of the purest kind. In 1757 the first edition of his works appeared, revised under his own eye. This procured him the renewal of his interrupted friendship with Frederick the Great, who sent him his own bust, with the inscription "Viro immortali." The Empress Catherine of Russia sent him splendid presents, accompanied by the most flattering letters. All who passed Ferney stopped to pay their respects and testify their esteem for this remarkable man. With almost universal admiration Voltaire, however was by no means happy. Weary of his quiet life, he went again to Paris in the beginning of the year 1770, when in the 84th year of his age. By his cutting ridicule, he had created for himself many enemies, and he was sensible of the dislike entertained towards him by various classes. In allusion to this, when interro-

gated by the officer of customs if he had any contraband goods along with him, "No, no," said the aged poet, "There is nothing contraband here but myself." The highest honours, however, were paid him by his literary brethren, by the French Academy, and by the actors who had so often embodied his exquisite conceptions. The calls upon him became so numerous as to be oppressive. "I am suffocated," said he, "but it is with roses." The celebrated Benjamin Franklin, accompanied by his grandson, came to see him. "My son," said Franklin, "fall upon your knees before this great man." Voltaire gave the boy his blessing with the words "God and freedom." He had brought with him a new tragedy, Irene, which was performed with the most unbounded applause—the royal family being present.

At the sixth representation his bust was crowned in the theatre, and one of the players stepping forward to the box where Voltaire was seated, presented him with a laurel wreath. He did not long survive this farce, for having overheated himself with receiving visits, and exhausted his spirits by supplying a perpetual fund of conversation, all this with incessant literary labour, and the change from his accustomed manner of life, affected his health so much that it was but too plain, exhausted nature could hold out no longer. He was sensible of

this, for he exclaimed, "I have come to Paris to find my glory and my grave." He was seized with a spitting of blood; and at last becoming restless in the night, he was obliged to use a soporific medicine. Of this he took so large a dose one night that he slept thirty-six hours, and expired shortly after awakening from it. He died on the 30th day of May, 1778, in the 85th year of his age.

When near his end the Marquis de Villette, with whom he resided, sent for the rector of St. Sulpice to visit him, in the hope that he might be able to induce Voltaire to receive the sacrament of the Catholic Church. Of this interview various conflicting accounts have been published, but it is now generally admitted that he died without receiving the consolations of that faith he had so often vilified. In consequence, it is said, of the refusal of the archbishop of Paris to allow the corpse to receive Christian burial, it was interred secretly at Leillieres, a Bernardine Abbey, between Nugent and Troyes. By a decree of the National Assembly (1791), his remains were removed to the Pantheon at Paris, and placed beside those of J. J. Rousseau and other eminent men.

The following sketch of his character is drawn by Marmontel—"He had sought glory by all the roads that are open to genius, and had deserved it by immense

labours and brilliant successes. The arm of ridicule was the instrument of his power, and he wielded it most fearfully and cruelly. But the greatest of blessings, repose, was unknown to him. It is true that envy at last appeared tired of the pursuit, and began to spare him on the brink of the grave. On his return to Paris, after a long exile, he enjoyed his renown, and the enthusiasm of a whole people grateful for the pleasure he had afforded them. He was one of our greatest poets; the most brilliant, the most eloquent, the most fertile of our prose writers. There is not in the literature of any country, either in verse or prose, an author who has written on so many opposite kinds of subjects, and has so constantly displayed a superiority in all of them."

The personal appearance of Voltaire was indicative of his character. In his countenance there was a mixture of the eagle and the monkey, and he displayed the boldness of the one with something of the malice of the other. Often possessing noble views and principles, he was not always actuated by the purest motives. Though a professed hater of prejudice, he frequently yielded to its influence in a manner little creditable to his character and his fame. It has been said that avarice assumed an ascendancy over him; yet, it is well known that in his latter years he was ever the friend of

the poor and the protector of the oppressed. The power, fertility, and energy of his intellect must ever command admiration—his character and principles as a moral being will ever meet the righteous condemnation of all well-constituted minds. His works want the charm which only a great soul can give. Religion he held in contempt, and his writings fostered that spirit of atheism which spread with such baleful rapidity over the whole of France, and which even yet infests her moral constitution. While contemplating this extraordinary man, and offering the willing and deserved tribute of admiration to his genius, we may and must regret that endowments so rare and brilliant were so often perverted from their lofty end. Let us contrast with this rarely-gifted mind, the moral greatness of the illustrious Howard, or even the poor unlettered peasant, who leans with unfaltering confidence on "the bosom of his Father and his God," and how do the boasted triumphs of intellect, unguided by pure and holy purposes, shrink into insignificance!

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